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MINISTRY OF BLUE ECONOMY AND FISHERIES

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CRDB BANK

29th ANNUAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP

Theme:
Transforming Tanzania's **Blue Economy** for Inclusive & Sustainable Development

25TH AND 26TH MAY, 2026 ZANZIBAR





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Finally, we acknowledge the dedication of the organizing committee, technical support teams, and REPOA staff, whose hard work ensured the successful planning and delivery of the workshop. Their collective efforts contributed significantly to the production of this report and to advancing dialogue on transforming Tanzania's blue economy for inclusive and sustainable development.

Executive Summary

The 29th Annual Research Workshop, organized by REPOA in collaboration with the Ministry of the Blue Economy and Fisheries, the **National Planning Commission**, and the CRDB Bank PLC under the theme *"Transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development,"* brought together:

- policymakers,
- researchers,
- development partners,
- financial institutions,
- private sector actors,
- practitioners and development stakeholders, and
- participants from Namibia, South Africa, EAC, World Bank, African Development Bank, and UNECA.

to examine opportunities, challenges and strategic priorities for advancing Tanzania's Blue Economy. Held in Zanzibar on 25th and 26th May 2026, the workshop provided a platform for sharing evidence, practical experiences and policy perspectives aimed at supporting inclusive, resilient and sustainable Blue Economy transformation. The **Guest of Honour** was **Hon. Hemed Suleiman ABDULLA,** the Second **Vice President, Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar**.

The workshop explored the Blue Economy through five interrelated thematic areas:

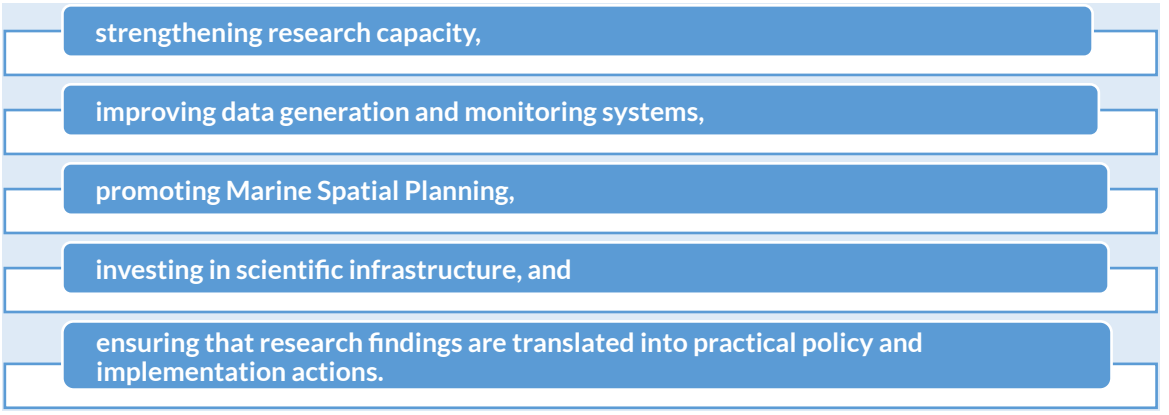
- the overall opportunities and challenges shaping Tanzania's Blue Economy;
- financing mechanisms for Blue Economy development;
- fisheries, aquaculture and coastal livelihoods;
- maritime transport, infrastructure, security and tourism;
- partnerships, research and renewable energy.

Together, these discussions demonstrated that successful Blue Economy transformation requires integrated planning, coordinated implementation and sustained collaboration across sectors, institutions and nations.

Across the two days of deliberations, participants consistently emphasized that Tanzania possesses considerable comparative advantages, including extensive marine and freshwater resources, strategic geographical location, rich biodiversity, expanding regional trade opportunities and a growing policy commitment to Blue Economy development. However, discussions also underscored

that realizing this potential will require moving beyond sector-specific interventions towards systems-based approaches that strengthen governance, institutional coordination, financing, infrastructure, research, innovation and community participation.

A recurring theme throughout the workshop was the central role of science, evidence and innovation in informing policy and investment decisions. Participants emphasized the importance of:



Equally, discussions highlighted the importance of strengthening human capital, supporting entrepreneurship and empowering coastal communities as active partners in sustainable resource management and economic development.

The workshop further identified several investor-ready opportunities across fisheries and aquaculture modernization, seaweed **value addition,** coastal and marine tourism, ports and logistics, renewable energy, maritime security technologies and Blue Economy innovation ecosystems. At the same time, participants highlighted emerging opportunities for research, innovation and knowledge generation in areas such as Blue Economy financing, value-chain development, **climate resilience**, Marine Spatial Planning, technology adoption and integrated source-to-sea management.

Overall, there were a total of nine key-note presentations during the workshop—from the opening session to the fifth plenary session.

- Opening Session—2 Key-Note Addresses
- Plenary Session 1—1 Key-Note Address
- Plenary Session 2—2 Key-Note Addresses
- Plenary Session 3—2 Key-Note Addresses
- Plenary Session 4—1 Key-Note Address
- Plenary Session 5—1 Key-Note Address.

The discussions identified five strategic priorities, which are:

First

- **The need to move beyond natural resource extraction towards value addition and industrialization.** While Tanzania possesses abundant marine and inland water resources, economic returns remain constrained by limited processing capacity, inadequate logistics, insufficient. **The transformation agenda therefore requires investments that expand domestic processing, increase exports of higher-value products and create quality employment.**

Second

- **Financing emerged as one of the defining themes of the workshop.** Speakers observed that conventional financing models are poorly suited to the characteristics of Blue Economy investments, particularly for small-scale fishers, coastal communities and emerging enterprise. **Innovative financing mechanisms including blue bonds, blended finance, impact investing, public-private partnerships (PPPs), climate finance and digital financial platforms were proposed as essential instruments for mobilizing long-term capital while reducing investment risks.**

Third

- **Participants stressed that effective governance constitutes the foundation of sustainable Blue Economy development.** Strong institutions, coherent policy frameworks, maritime security, transparent regulatory systems and evidence-based planning were identified as prerequisites for attracting investment and ensuring sustainable resource management. **Emphasis was placed on strengthening marine spatial planning, fisheries governance and intergovernmental coordination between Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.**

Fourth

- **Climate resilience and environmental sustainability were recognized as inseparable from economic transformation.** Participants repeatedly cautioned that economic growth cannot be sustained if marine ecosystems continue to experience degradation arising from illegal fishing, pollution, habitat destruction, coral bleaching and climate change. **Consequently, investments in conservation, ecosystem restoration and climate adaptation were considered indispensable components of Blue Economy development rather than competing priorities.**

Fifth

- **Inclusiveness emerged as a central principle throughout the workshop.** Participants reiterated that Blue Economy transformation must deliberately benefit women, youth, small-scale fishers and coastal communities through improved access to finance, technology, skills development, entrepreneurship opportunities and participation in decision-making processes. **Inclusive development was viewed not only as a social objective but also as a prerequisite for long-term sustainability and national prosperity.**

Throughout the workshop, speakers consistently highlighted the indispensable role of research in informing policy and investment decisions. High-quality scientific evidence, socioeconomic analysis, innovation and knowledge partnerships were identified as critical enablers of adaptive policymaking, institutional learning and effective implementation of national development priorities.

Overall, the workshop concluded that Tanzania's Blue Economy represents not only an important economic opportunity but also a governance, research, financing and sustainability agenda that requires coordinated action across government, research institutions, financial institutions, development partners, the private sector and coastal communities. The discussions reinforced that the country's future success will depend upon its collective ability to transform existing opportunities into inclusive, resilient and sustainable development outcomes through continued collaboration, evidence-informed policymaking and strategic investment.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AU	African Union
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
COVID-19	COrona VIrus Disease of 2019
CRDB	Community and Rural Development Bank
DIRA 2050	Tanzania National Vision 2050
EAC	East African Community
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FIF	Financial Inclusion Framework
FiTI	Fisheries Transparency Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KMKM	Kikosi cha Kuzuia Magendo (Swahili for Special Anti-Smuggling Force)
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSC	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MSP	Maritime Spatial Plan
NEMC	National Environmental Management Council
NPC	National Planning Commission
NTP	National Transport Policy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OTEC	Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion
POPI	President's Office Planning and Investment
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PWDs	People with Disabilities
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation
SAIMI	South African International Maritime Institute
SFCs	Shehia Fisheries Committees
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
SUA	Sokoine University of Agriculture
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TADB	Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank
TAFIRI	Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute
TAOA	Tanzania Aviation Operators Association
TASFAM	Tanzania Scaling-up Sustainable Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture
TIB	Tanzania Investment Bank
TIPS	Tanzania Investment Payment System
TPDF	Tanzania People's Defence Forces

UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Commission for Africa
UTT	Unit of Trust Tanzania
VICOBA	Village Community Banks
VPO	Vice President's Office
VSO	Voluntary Service Organisations
WIOMSA	West Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
ZaSCO	Zanzibar Seaweed Company
ZATO	Zanzibar Association of Tour Operators
ZMA	Zanzibar Maritime Authority

1.0 Introduction

The 29th Annual Research Workshop, organized by REPOA in partnership with the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, the National Planning Commission and the CRDB PLC under the theme *"Transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development,"* was held on 25–26 May 2026 at the Golden Tulip Airport Hotel, Zanzibar. The workshop brought together policymakers, researchers, development partners, financial institutions, private sector representatives, development practitioners, civil society organizations and academia from Tanzania, Namibia, South Africa, EAC, UNECA, World Bank, and the African Development Bank. to examine opportunities for accelerating Tanzania's Blue Economy while promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

Recognizing the Blue Economy as one of Tanzania's emerging strategic development priorities, the workshop sought to strengthen dialogue between research, policy and practice by providing a platform for sharing evidence, experiences and innovative approaches capable of informing decision-making and supporting implementation. Through keynote presentations, panel discussions and plenary sessions, participants explored policy options, practical experiences and investment opportunities across multiple Blue Economy sectors while examining the institutional, financial, environmental, and governance conditions required to support long-term transformation.

The workshop was jointly organized through collaboration between REPOA, the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, Zanzibar, the National Planning Commission and CRDB Bank PLC, with support from development partners and contributions from national, regional and international experts representing government institutions, research organizations, financial institutions, academia and the private sector.

1.1 Workshop Objectives

The workshop sought to:



1.2 Workshop Structure

The workshop was organized around five thematic plenary sessions, complemented by two special sessions and interactive panel discussions:

- Opening plenary session: strategic context for the two-day workshop;
- Plenary session 1: the overall opportunities and challenges shaping Tanzania's Blue Economy;
- Plenary Session 2: financing mechanisms for Blue Economy development;
- Plenary Session 3: fisheries, aquaculture and coastal livelihoods;
- Plenary Session 4: maritime transport, infrastructure, security and tourism;
- Plenary Session 5: blue economy partnerships, research and renewable energy;
- Closing Session.

Collectively, these sessions explored the Blue Economy from multiple but interconnected perspectives, progressing from the broader policy and governance landscape to financing, coastal livelihoods, maritime infrastructure, partnerships, research and renewable energy.

The proceedings are organized in the same sequence as the workshop deliberations. Following the Opening Plenary, each plenary session is presented together with its keynote presentations, panel discussions and plenary dialogue. The proceedings conclude with the workshop's key reflections, emerging investor-ready opportunities, research, innovation and knowledge generation opportunities, and an overall conclusion that captures the principal messages emerging across the two-day event.

2.0 Opening Plenary

The Opening Plenary formally inaugurated REPOA's 29th Annual Research Workshop on *"Transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development."* The session established the strategic context for the two-day workshop by highlighting the significance of the Blue Economy within Tanzania's long-term development agenda.

- Through remarks from the host institution, development partners, government representatives and the Guest of Honour, speakers underscored the importance of evidence-informed policymaking, institutional coordination, sustainable investment, regional collaboration and inclusive economic transformation.
- It also featured two keynote presentations examining innovative approaches to financing the Blue Economy, followed by a synthesis of the key messages emerging from both presentations.
- Collectively, the session established the policy, investment and research agenda that framed discussions throughout the workshop.

2.1 Dr. Donald Mmari, REPOA Executive Director— Institutional Commitment to Evidence-Based Blue Economy Transformation

The Executive Director of REPOA, Dr. Donald Mmari, delivered the welcome remarks by underscoring that the transformation of the Blue Economy is not only central to enhancing prosperity for citizens, but also critical for strengthening international collaboration and ensuring the sustainability of the blue ecosystem in the region. He underscored the organisation's continued role in facilitating evidence-based policy dialogue and strengthening linkages between research and national development priorities. He further noted that REPOA, established in 1995, is marking 30 years of existence, during which it has consistently organized its Annual Research Workshop, with exceptions only in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and in 2025 owing to the general elections. Dr. Mmari extended appreciation to H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, who served as the Guest of Honour at the 26th Annual Research Workshop, acknowledging his continued engagement in advancing research and policy dialogue.



He highlighted that REPOA's Strategic Plan and associated research programme are designed to support the implementation of national and sectoral strategies by generating relevant, evidence-based research to inform development visions and programmes. He further emphasized that one of REPOA's three core research themes—"***Economic resilience, competitiveness, and inclusive growth***"—encompasses work on business environment analysis, private sector development, structural transformation (including the role of the Blue Economy), green transition processes, trade competitiveness, value chain development, and regional integration.

Dr. Mmari observed that the Blue Economy is firmly embedded within the development visions of both the United Republic of Tanzania and the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, where it is recognized as a key driver of economic growth, transformation, and job creation. He further noted the:

Participants	• The carefully selected composition of participants included policymakers, private sector actors, academics, and researchers from Tanzania and beyond, including Seychelles, Namibia, United Nations Commission for Africa-East Africa (UNECA-EAC), the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the EAC and South Africa, alongside national experts from government, development organizations, and academia.
Support of Core Partners	• He acknowledged the support of core partners—including Norway, Ireland, and Sweden—as well as other domestic and international collaborators, and extended appreciation to MoBEF, NPC, and CRDB Bank for their valuable contribution and commitment in organizing the workshop and supporting the advancement of Blue Economy transformation in Tanzania.

He expressed hope that policymakers present would actively engage with the research findings and draw meaningful insights to inform decision-making.

2.2 Remarks by the Host, Capt. Hamad Bakar—Zanzibar's Blue Economy Vision: From Resource Endowment to Sustainable Economic Transformation

The Principal Secretary of the host institution, the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries (MoBEF), Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, Capt. Hamad Bakar Hamad, welcomed participants by noting that the discussions were taking place at a critical moment for Tanzania and the wider Indian Ocean region. He described it as both a privilege and honor to share Zanzibar's experience and strategic direction as the archipelago positions itself to harness the vast opportunities embedded in its ocean resources.

He emphasized that Zanzibar is a traditional maritime society with a long-standing and inseparable relationship with the ocean, which is deeply intertwined with its culture, trade, livelihoods, and economic future. He noted that Zanzibar comprises 55 islands with a total land area of approximately 2,654 square kilometres, surrounded by an Exclusive Economic Zone of about 233,000 square

kilometres shared with mainland Tanzania—an ocean space nearly 84 times larger than its landmass. He observed that future prosperity increasingly depends on how effectively these ocean resources are managed.

Capt. Hamad highlighted that nearly 99 percent of Zanzibar's international trade by volume is seaborne, while fisheries and tourism remain among the leading sectors of the economy. Together, these sectors support the livelihoods of more than two-thirds of the population and contribute significantly to employment creation, empowerment, food security, and foreign exchange earnings. He further noted Zanzibar's strategic location along the Western Indian Ocean, near some of the world's busiest maritime trade routes linking Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, giving it a comparative advantage to emerge as a regional hub for commerce, fisheries, and maritime logistics.



He observed that the ocean is no longer viewed merely as a transport corridor or source of natural resources, but increasingly as an economic, security, and geopolitical frontier. In this regard, Zanzibar considers the Blue Economy not only an economic agenda but also a pillar of national resilience, sovereignty, and sustainable development. He explained that the Blue Economy agenda is firmly anchored in the Zanzibar Development Vision 2050, which positions it as a key catalyst for achieving upper-middle-income status through inclusive and sustainable use of ocean resources.

Capt. Hamad further noted that Zanzibar remains among the fastest-growing economies in the region:

Recording economic growth of 7.1 percent in 2025, with foreign direct investment commitments exceeding USD 6.3 billion, of which 60 percent is concentrated in Blue Economy sectors.

He attributed this progress to bold economic reforms and investment-friendly policies under the leadership of H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar and Chair of the Revolutionary Council.

He outlined tangible progress in Blue Economy implementation, including Zanzibar's contribution to the global "30 by 30" conservation target through the establishment of five operational marine conservation areas covering approximately 2,100 square kilometres, with two additional areas recently designated, adding a further 1,300 square kilometres under conservation management. He also highlighted advances in maritime spatial planning through improved marine resource mapping, strengthened stakeholder coordination, and integration of MSP into broader Blue Economy governance frameworks, with emerging measurable socio-economic outcomes.

He further noted that marine conservation efforts, MSP initiatives, and public awareness campaigns among coastal communities have:

- Contributed to increased fish catches and seaweed production in recent years, supporting more than 100,000 people along value chains, with strong participation by women and youth.
- In the seaweed sector, Zanzibar is transitioning from primary production to value addition, **with two processing factories expected to become operational within the year, producing animal feed, fertilizers, and food supplements.**

He added that government investment in fisheries infrastructure is also advancing, including preparations for a modern fish port and two fish processing facilities aimed at strengthening domestic fisheries, expanding export capacity, and enabling industrial-scale fisheries development.

Capt. Hamad cautioned that the Blue Economy cannot thrive without maritime security and effective ocean governance:

- He noted that the region continues to face serious challenges, including illegal fishing, maritime crime, environmental degradation, coral bleaching, coastal erosion, and the growing impacts of climate change;
- He stressed that illegal fishing is not only an environmental concern but also an economic and security threat, as it undermines livelihoods, government revenues, and the sustainability of marine resources;
- Accordingly, he emphasized that economic governance of the ocean must go hand in hand with maritime security governance.

He called for stronger regional cooperation, improved maritime domain awareness, enhanced surveillance systems, and coordinated action across the Western Indian Ocean, noting that no single country can address these challenges alone. **He further underscored the role of institutions such as REPOA, academia, research organizations, and financial institutions in generating evidence-based policy solutions and innovative financing mechanisms to support sustainable Blue Economy transformation.**

Despite the challenges, Capt. Hamad expressed strong optimism about the future, affirming that the Blue Economy represents one of the greatest opportunities for inclusive and sustainable transformation for Zanzibar, Tanzania, and the wider region. He reaffirmed Zanzibar's readiness for investment and welcomed strategic partnerships in fisheries and aquaculture, coastal tourism, maritime infrastructure, offshore energy, logistics, marine services, and blue finance.

He concluded by reaffirming Zanzibar's commitment to becoming a strategic, secure, and investment-ready Blue Economy hub in the Western Indian Ocean, emphasizing that the ocean connects all nations and its future is a shared responsibility. He called for collective vision, partnership, and determination to ensure that the Blue Economy becomes a powerful engine for resilience, prosperity, and regional cooperation.

2.3 Remarks by REPOA's Core Partner – Ms. Susan Keating, Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of Ireland to Tanzania and the East African Community—Strengthening Research, Financing, and Policy Linkages.

Ms. Susan Keating, Deputy Ambassador of Ireland and the East African Community, speaking on behalf of Ireland and Norway—REPOA's long-standing core funding partners—commended REPOA for convening the research workshop and bringing together diverse stakeholders for policy dialogue, research, and learning. She noted that it was a privilege to reflect on two key challenges central to the Blue Economy agenda:

First

- **How to address fragmentation within the sector by strengthening networking and identifying synergies among actors; and**

Second

- **How to bridge the gap between research and policy so that development is more consistently guided by evidence and learning.**

She observed that the workshop theme on transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy into an inclusive and transformative sector was **timely and highly relevant**, emphasizing that such transformation must focus on building more resilient economies and communities, particularly in the face of climate change. She noted that the discussions align strongly with Tanzania's ambitious national and Zanzibar development blueprints—DIRA 2050 and Vision 2050—which place the Blue Economy at the centre of economic transformation while recognizing climate change as a major threat.



Ms. Keating commended the strong collaboration between REPOA and the Governments of both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, emphasizing that such partnerships are essential for achieving long-term national aspirations, as no single actor can address these complex global challenges alone. She stressed that as research-policy linkages are strengthened, it is critical to keep impact on people at the forefront, ensuring that Blue Economy interventions are grounded in rigorous evidence and deliver inclusive, sustainable socio-economic benefits, particularly for women and youth, while protecting marine ecosystems.

Drawing on comparative experience, she reflected on the economic transformation journeys of Ireland and Norway, noting that at the heart of both countries' success has been the integration of research, policy, and people.

- She explained that Ireland transitioned from an agrarian economy to a global knowledge hub through deliberate investment in human capital and the systematic integration of research into national economic strategy;
- While Norway has consistently reinvested natural resource wealth into strong scientific institutions.

In both contexts, she observed, there has been close alignment between higher education, state agencies, and policymakers, enabling sustained public and private investment in science, innovation, and long-term planning, ultimately creating resilient, high-value employment.

She further noted that both Ireland and Norway have applied this evidence-based model to their Blue Economy development, treating maritime resources as key economic drivers while embedding marine science, data analytics, and socio-economic research into maritime spatial planning. This approach, she said, ensures a balance between innovation and economic growth on the one hand, and environmental protection on the other, safeguarding oceans and coastal ecosystems for future generations.

Ms. Keating highlighted the shared maritime heritage linking Ireland, Norway, and Tanzania, noting that as island and coastal societies:

- Their identities, cultures, and prosperity are deeply connected to the sea.
- Zanzibar, in particular, shares this close relationship with the ocean, underpinned by rich historical heritage and marine biodiversity.
- This shared connection, she said, forms a strong foundation for continued partnership, learning, and cooperation.

She emphasized that across all three contexts, the Blue Economy is not merely a resource base but a legacy that must be protected for future generations. While acknowledging Tanzania's abundant marine and coastal resources, she posed the critical question of how this potential can be transformed into tangible and inclusive development outcomes. She cautioned that commonly used terms such as **"opportunity" and "potential"** must be translated into concrete action, with urgent attention to key threats including overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution, and the accelerating impacts of climate change such as ocean acidification and global warming.

She reiterated the shared belief that a truly inclusive Blue Economy must both lift people out of poverty and protect the environment, noting that conservation efforts are most successful when they directly improve the socio-economic wellbeing of local communities. She stressed that sustainability must be inclusive, with deliberate efforts to empower women, girls, and youth, ensuring their voices, ideas, and participation are central to decision-making processes.

Ms. Keating also shared Ireland's experience, noting that the Blue Economy has been prioritized within its international development policy and its embassy strategy in Tanzania.

Ireland's approach, she explained, is grounded in a dual focus on conservation and sustainable livelihoods, recognizing the need to balance environmental protection with the economic realities of communities dependent on natural resources.

She outlined several ongoing Irish-supported initiatives, including support for:	➢ the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI), which promotes transparent fisheries management in Tanzania and across six other African countries;
	➢ the Ireland's partnership with IUCN through the **"Bahari Mali Programme,"** which includes research collaboration with institutions such as TAFIRI, SAFIRI, Sokoine University of Agriculture, and other academic partners, underscoring the importance of grounding programmes in strong research and knowledge systems; and
	➢ Irish support for the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), which works with local authorities to strengthen investment planning for community resilience against climate shocks.

She further emphasized Ireland's commitment to research capacity building, including support for Master's and PhD students working on ocean acidification and climate change adaptation. She noted that by the end of 2026, the FiTI initiative will conclude a major study on national climate actions in the fisheries and marine sector across Africa, aimed at improving transparency in reporting and monitoring climate-related funding flows.

At the global level, she added, Ireland supports initiatives that promote climate entrepreneurship and collaborates with institutions such as the World Maritime University to accelerate Blue Economy enterprises, ocean conservation, and livelihood development across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific.

Ms. Keating emphasized that innovation and financing are central to the future of the Blue Economy, calling for:	➢ **renewed efforts to explore new financing mechanisms,**
	➢ **value addition,**
	➢ **technological application,**
	➢ **skills development, and**
	➢ **trade promotion,**
	➢ **the private sector playing a critical role.**
She welcomed the strong private sector participation at the workshop and encouraged deeper dialogue and collaboration across stakeholders.	

She further observed that as the global development landscape evolves, there is a need to rethink aid priorities and approaches, noting the importance of turning challenges into opportunities for reform and innovation. She stressed that achieving meaningful progress will require stronger coordination and synergy among partners, warning against duplication of efforts and emphasizing the need for greater dialogue, shared learning, and integrated solutions.

Ireland's Partnership to Tanzania

- **In conclusion, she expressed hope that the workshop would serve as a platform for meaningful engagement among stakeholders to address these critical issues.**
- **She reaffirmed Ireland's commitment as a steadfast partner in Tanzania's Blue Economy journey, supporting efforts to build a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future.**

2.4 Remarks by Prof. Rwekaza Mukandala, Chair, REPOA Board of Directors— Bridging Policy Ambitions and Implementation Realities

Prof. Rwekaza Mukandala, Chair of the REPOA Board of Directors, delivered the welcome remarks on behalf of the Board and collaborating institutions, extending a warm welcome to participants, including the Guest of Honour, to REPOA's 29th Annual Research Workshop held under the theme "Transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development." He noted that the workshop comes at a pivotal moment for Tanzania and particularly Zanzibar, where emerging evidence shows that the Blue Economy is already a cornerstone of economic activity and livelihoods, contributing significantly to GDP and employment. He emphasized that beyond economic value, oceans and coastal ecosystems play a vital role in sustaining biodiversity, supporting fisheries, protecting coastlines, and underpinning tourism, while also shaping the culture, identity, and livelihoods of coastal communities.

He underscored the interconnected nature of economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social well-being, noting that Zanzibar's island context both creates significant opportunities for innovation, investment, and job creation, and imposes a responsibility to ensure sustainable and equitable management of marine resources for present and future generations. He acknowledged progress in establishing key policy and institutional frameworks for the Blue Economy, including the Zanzibar Blue Economy Policy, its Implementation Strategy, the Fisheries Policy and Master Plan, and the Gender Strategy, while stressing that the critical challenge lies in effective implementation.



Prof. Mukandala highlighted the importance of the workshop as a platform for bridging the gap between policy and practice by bringing together policymakers, researchers, the private sector, and development partners to align priorities, identify constraints, and generate evidence-based, actionable solutions. He commended the strong partnerships that made the workshop possible, particularly between REPOA, the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, the National Planning

Commission, and CRDB Bank Group, noting that such collaboration is essential for advancing evidence-informed development.

He further welcomed the participation of keynote speakers and international delegates, whose diverse perspectives, he said, would enrich the discussions and deepen understanding of how to harness the potential of the Blue Economy while addressing its challenges.

Transformation of the Blue Economy	**In conclusion, he emphasized that the transformation of the Blue Economy presents an urgent and inspiring opportunity for inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and long-term resilience, expressing hope that the workshop would generate practical insights to guide policy and investment decisions and position Zanzibar and Tanzania as leaders in sustainable Blue Economy development.**

2.5 Remarks by REPOA's Collaborating Institution – Dr. Blandina Kilama, Deputy Executive Director, National Planning Commission—Aligning Blue Economy Transformation with National Development Priorities

Representing Hon. Prof. Kitila Alexander Mkumbo, Minister of State, President's Office – Planning and Investment, Dr. Blandina Kilama, Deputy Executive Director of the National Planning Commission under the Ministry of State, President's Office (Planning and Investment), described the workshop as an important gathering that provides a platform for research, knowledge exchange, and policy dialogue. She noted that the workshop is taking place at a crucial moment for Tanzania as the country advances toward its long-term development vision under DIRA 2050 and prepares for the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan.

She emphasized that the Blue Economy is no longer merely a sectoral focus but has become a strategic pillar for transforming Tanzania into a competitive, inclusive, resilient, and prosperous economy. She highlighted its vast potential across fisheries, maritime trade, tourism, transport, marine resources, innovation, industrial transformation, employment generation, and value chain development. She further noted that Tanzania's extensive coastal and inland water resources present a unique opportunity to position the Blue Economy as a driver of sustainable growth and both regional and global competitiveness.

Dr Kilama stressed that achieving sustainable national development requires more than investment and infrastructure;

- It demands robust, evidence-based planning and decision-making.
- In this regard, she noted that the President's Office, Planning and Investment (POPI) has continued to strengthen the integration of research evidence into national planning and policy processes.
- Further, that high-quality research is essential for identifying development challenges, generating innovative solutions, guiding policy reforms, and supporting the effective implementation of national priorities.

Dr. Kilama explained that the two-day workshop aims to explore opportunities for Tanzania and partner countries to deepen participation in the global Blue Economy, with a focus on expanding trade, promoting value addition, and enhancing competitiveness. She added that lessons from successful countries within Africa and globally would serve as important references for accelerating the development of sustainable Blue Economies. She encouraged participants to foster evidence-based policy dialogue, promote locally grounded research that supports inclusive and productivity-driven growth, and identify practical strategies to strengthen implementation of Blue Economy initiatives and core drivers.



She expressed confidence that participants would enrich the discussions and find the workshop a valuable professional engagement, both individually and institutionally. She further noted that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has taken deliberate steps to institutionalize research within the national planning architecture through the development of the National Strategic Research Agenda and National Research Guidelines. These frameworks are intended to align research activities with national priorities and ensure that knowledge generated directly supports the implementation of DIRA 2050 and other development frameworks, ultimately improving livelihoods.

- She also acknowledged the strong collaboration between POPI and researchers, assistant directors of policy, research, and innovation across sectors, as well as the private sector.
- Looking ahead, she emphasized that Tanzania must continue to build a culture of implementation driven by innovation, research, accountability, and strategic partnerships between government, academia, the private sector, and development partners.

Scope of the Blue Economy	➢ In conclusion, he emphasized that the Blue Economy is not merely an economic sector but a collective national journey requiring responsibility, innovation, strong research, and regional and international cooperation. ➢ He encouraged participants to engage in fruitful discussions and contribute meaningfully to national development.

She concluded by noting that the future competitiveness of the nation will depend not only on the resources it possesses, but also on its ability to generate ideas, apply knowledge, and translate evidence into action. She highlighted the Annual Research Workshop as an important platform for strengthening the research-policy nexus and advancing inclusive and sustainable economic development through the Blue Economy. She encouraged participants to fully utilize the platform for constructive dialogue, collaboration, and exchange of ideas, and urged that the recommendations emerging from the workshop be effectively integrated into national planning processes to support sustainable and inclusive development for present and future generations.

2.6 Remarks by Hon. Denis Lazaro Londo, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Industries and Trade

Hon. Denis Lazaro Londo, Deputy Minister for Industry and Trade of the United Republic of Tanzania, speaking on behalf of the Minister, Hon. Judith Kapinga, acknowledged REPOA as an important stakeholder of the Ministry and noted that the workshop theme is closely aligned with DIRA 2050, which represents the long-term future direction of the nation.



He observed that Tanzania is uniquely positioned, being both part of the Great Lakes region and among countries with a long coastline, which provides significant economic opportunities compared to other East African Community member states. He emphasized that DIRA 2050 aims to grow Tanzania's economy to USD 1 trillion, with a strong focus on ensuring that the private sector plays a central role, contributing at least 70 percent to the implementation process. He stressed that the private sector cannot be left behind in the country's development agenda.

Hon. Londo noted that the Blue Economy has a wide scope and stands as one of the key pillars of DIRA 2050 implementation. He emphasized that nothing promotes inclusive economic growth more effectively than maritime and fisheries activities, along with the value addition of coastal and marine resources. He further highlighted that the current national budget is the first to be implemented under the DIRA 2050 framework, underscoring its significance as a foundational step in the new development trajectory.

He commended REPOA for its longstanding contribution to national development, noting that over its 30 years of research work, its findings have consistently informed policy development and will remain essential for the successful implementation of DIRA 2050. He emphasized that continued progress will depend heavily on research evidence and professional dialogue that can generate practical solutions to existing government challenges.

Reflecting on the broader significance of the Blue Economy, he remarked that the world is witnessing a redefinition of the role of water in economic and geopolitical affairs. He noted that while it was once difficult to imagine water as a strategic economic instrument, contemporary global developments demonstrate its influence, citing events such as those in the Strait of Hormuz and their impact on global economies. He stressed that this underscores the importance of understanding the Blue Economy not as a tool of competition or conflict, but as a platform for inclusive economic growth, livelihoods, and cooperation among nations. He called for a shared understanding of the Blue Economy as a unifying factor rather than an instrument of economic leverage against others.

In conclusion, he expressed appreciation to the Second Vice President for hosting the workshop and conveyed hope that the deliberations would generate practical solutions to challenges in the Blue Economy sector that could be integrated into national policy and planning frameworks.

2.7 Remarks by Hon. Masoud Ali Mohammed, Minister of Blue Economy and Fisheries, Zanzibar

Hon. Masoud Ali Mohammed, Minister for Blue Economy and Fisheries of Zanzibar, welcomed the Guest of Honour and all delegates to the workshop, noting that the Blue Economy is a central development agenda for the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, championed under the leadership of H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar.



He emphasized that the Blue Economy is a cross-cutting national priority with significant contributions to economic development, requiring strong research foundations as well as a clear vision to guide when and where investments should be made in order to achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes. He commended REPOA and other academic and research institutions for their instrumental role in generating evidence and informing policies, strategies, visions, and development goals that continue to advance the Blue Economy agenda.

The Minister assured the Guest of Honour that the discussions, deliberations, and resolutions from the workshop would be taken seriously as inputs for strengthening and transforming the Blue Economy for sustainable development in both the United Republic of Tanzania and Zanzibar. He encouraged participants to contribute ideas that would guide the proper and sustainable utilization of water and marine resources to support present and future development.

He concluded by inviting the Guest of Honour to deliver the official opening address.

2.8 Opening Remarks by Hon. Hemed Suleiman Abdulla, 2nd Vice President, Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar

Hon. Hemed Suleiman Abdulla, Second Vice President of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, began his opening address by expressing gratitude to Almighty God for enabling participants to gather in good health. He extended sincere appreciation to the organizers of the 29th REPOA Annual Research Workshop for inviting him as Guest of Honour, and commended REPOA for selecting Zanzibar once again as the host of this important event while also marking 30 years since the institution's establishment.

He observed that Zanzibar continues to attract scholars, investors, innovators, and policymakers due to its peace, natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and the hospitality of its people. He expressed gratitude to H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, for their strong leadership and commitment to advancing sustainable development through the Blue Economy agenda. **He noted that their vision has strengthened marine and coastal resource management, fostered innovation, and promoted inclusive prosperity, positioning Tanzania as a regional leader in sustainable Blue Economy development.**



The Second Vice President acknowledged the long-standing partnership between REPOA and the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar in supporting research, policy development, and capacity building across key sectors including trade, industry, and the Blue Economy, noting that this collaboration has significantly contributed to Zanzibar's economic transformation. He also expressed appreciation to the Embassy of Ireland for its support through the Inclusive Economic Growth Programme, particularly the Bahari Mali Project implemented in Pemba, highlighting it as an example of how marine conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and community empowerment can be effectively integrated.

He noted that the workshop theme, ***"Transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development,"*** aligns strongly with Zanzibar's Development Vision 2050. Under the leadership of H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, he said, Zanzibar has made significant progress in strengthening institutional systems, innovation, and coordination within the Blue Economy sector. He emphasized that the workshop provides a valuable platform for exchanging experiences and strengthening cooperation among Tanzania and regional stakeholders in advancing effective implementation of the Blue Economy agenda.

He highlighted Zanzibar's attractiveness as a global tourism destination, rooted in its resilient marine ecosystems, cultural richness, and long-standing peace.

He pointed to Marine Protected Areas such as Menai Bay, Mnemba Atoll, Chumbe Island, and Misali Island as evidence that conservation and economic development can successfully coexist.

He also noted ongoing government investments in modern port infrastructure, including the Maruhubi passenger and cargo port, fishing ports, and the integrated Mangapwani port.

However, he cautioned that climate change continues to pose serious threats, including coral bleaching, rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and declining fish stocks. He stressed that climate resilience must remain central to Blue Economy development, supported by nature-based solutions, resilient infrastructure, and effective early warning systems to protect ecosystems and livelihoods.

He further underscored the emerging importance of the Blue Carbon Economy, noting that mangroves and seagrass ecosystems provide significant carbon sequestration potential that could enable Tanzania to access global carbon markets. He emphasized the need to strengthen carbon measurement systems, ensure transparency in benefit-sharing, and build trusted partnerships that integrate environmental conservation with social and economic development.

The Second Vice President highlighted the critical role of youth in driving sustainable transformation,



noting their increasing participation in innovative ventures such as seaweed processing, aquaculture, ecotourism, marine technology, sustainable crafts, and digital marine services. He stressed that the Blue Economy extends beyond traditional sectors such as fisheries and maritime transport, encompassing innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology-driven growth.

He reaffirmed the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar's commitment to investing in marine GIS training, drone technology, modern aquaculture systems, and marine information systems to equip young people with skills for the future. He also emphasized the importance of strengthening fisheries and maritime training institutions, partnerships with universities, and integrating maritime education into school curricula to ensure long-term sectoral development.

He further noted Zanzibar's broad investment opportunities in aquaculture, marine processing (including seaweed), marine biotechnology, ecotourism, maritime transport, blue carbon initiatives, circular economy solutions, and digital marine technologies, welcoming both domestic and international investors to participate in the sector.

Scope of the Blue Economy	➢ In conclusion, he emphasized that the Blue Economy is not merely an economic sector but a collective national journey requiring responsibility, innovation, strong research, and regional and international cooperation. ➢ He encouraged participants to engage in fruitful discussions and contribute meaningfully to national development.

He concluded with the message that ***"the ocean does not divide us; it connects us, and in its depths lie not only resources but possibilities as vast as the horizon,"*** and officially declared the 29th REPOA Annual Research Workshop, held on 25 May 2026, formally opened.

2.9 Vote of Thanks by, Ms. Rehema Tukai, Vice Chair, REPOA Board of Directors

Ms. Rehema Tukai, Vice Chairperson of the REPOA Board, delivered the vote of thanks, expressing appreciation to the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar for hosting the workshop and for leading the organizing committee that worked behind the scenes to ensure the successful convening of the event.

She noted that this was the second time REPOA had collaborated with the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar in hosting the Annual Research Workshop, highlighting the importance of deepening continued engagement, interaction, and knowledge exchange. She also referenced the Guest of Honour's remarks on the ocean as a unifying force, reinforcing the shared responsibility and connection among stakeholders.

Ms. Tukai commended the exemplary leadership of H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar, in advancing the Blue Economy agenda, noting its central role in shaping Zanzibar's development trajectory. She further acknowledged the National Planning Commission as a key lead partner in the organization of the workshop, alongside other collaborating institutions.

She extended special appreciation to CRDB Bank for its support and active engagement, recognizing its role not only as a financial institution but also as a strategic development partner. She also thanked the Embassy of Ireland for its financial and technical support, particularly its collaboration with universities, which continues to strengthen and enrich REPOA's research and policy agenda.



Ms. Tukai further expressed gratitude to the keynote speakers for their valuable contributions and willingness to share knowledge, as well as to the organizing team drawn from REPOA, the National Planning Commission, the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, and CRDB Bank, for their coordinated efforts in delivering a successful workshop.

She concluded by thanking the management of Golden Tulip Hotel for hosting the event for the

second time, acknowledging their continued support in providing a conducive environment for the Annual Research Workshop.

2.10 Group Photo Session

Following the Vote of Thanks, participants proceeded to an official photo session to commemorate the opening of the 29th Annual Research Workshop. The photo session brought together key stakeholders who had contributed to the successful convening of the workshop and reflected the collaborative spirit underpinning Tanzania's Blue Economy transformation agenda.



The photo session marked the conclusion of the official opening programme before participants proceeded to the technical sessions of the workshop.

2.11 Keynote Presentation 1: "Positive Response to the Financing Needs of the Blue Economy Sector in Tanzania and Other African Countries".

Presenter: Dr. Firas Raad, World Bank Division Director for Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe

The Global and Regional Imperative for Blue Economy Transformation

Expressing his appreciation to the organizers for the invitation, Dr. Firas Raad underscored the importance of strengthening alignment between research institutions, policymakers, development partners and the private sector in advancing a coordinated Blue Economy agenda. He reaffirmed the World Bank's view that the ocean represents one of the most underutilized sources of global economic growth and employment. Dr. Raad observed that if the ocean economy were considered

a single economy, it would rank among the largest in the world, with an estimated natural capital value of approximately US$24 trillion. He noted that fisheries and aquaculture support around 63 million jobs globally while sustaining the livelihoods of hundreds of millions more through related value chains. Despite this potential, he cautioned that marine resources are under growing pressure, with more than one-third of global fish stocks currently exploited at unsustainable levels, resulting in estimated economic losses of approximately US$80 billion annually.

Emerging Pressures on Marine Resources and Coastal Livelihoods

Focusing on Eastern and Southern Africa, Dr. Raad highlighted the growing pressure placed on marine ecosystems by rapid population growth, rising demand for food, and increasing competition for economic opportunities. **In Tanzania, he noted that the population is projected to increase from approximately 61 million in 2020 to 80 million by 2030, while demand for fish is expected to double over the same period.** He observed that many commercially important nearshore fish stocks are already overexploited, indicating that resource stress is no longer a future concern but a present challenge. Climate change is further intensifying these pressures, with fish biomass in the region projected to decline significantly under high-emission scenarios.



The Need for a Just and Inclusive Transition

A recurring theme throughout Dr. Raad's presentation was the importance of ensuring that sustainability measures are accompanied by viable economic alternatives for coastal populations. He observed that many coastal households operate within diversified but fragile livelihood systems that combine fishing, agriculture, trade and informal economic activities. Strengthening resource management must therefore be accompanied by interventions that support income diversification and access to higher-value economic opportunities.

The World Bank's Three-Pillar Approach to Blue Economy Development

Dr. Raad outlined the World Bank's approach to Blue Economy development, which is structured around three mutually reinforcing pillars: **infrastructure, institutions and finance**.

Under the infrastructure pillar	**He highlighted investments in climate-resilient fisheries infrastructure, including fish landing sites, markets, processing facilities, cold storage systems, digital technologies and safety-at-sea infrastructure.**
Under the institutions pillar	**He emphasized strengthening fisheries governance systems, regulatory frameworks, research institutions and data management systems.**

Under the finance pillar	He stressed the need to mobilize private capital through innovative financing mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, value-chain financing, business incubation programmes and risk-sharing instruments.

TASFAM: A Practical Model for Blue Economy Transformation

Dr. Raad presented the **Tanzania Scaling Up Sustainable Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Project (TASFAM), approved in June 2025 with a total investment of US$112 million**, as a practical demonstration of the World Bank's integrated approach to Blue Economy development.

Under the infrastructure pillar	The project supports the construction and rehabilitation of fish landing sites, fish markets, anchovy storage facilities, sardine and small pelagic processing plants, digital systems, and safety-at-sea infrastructure. These investments are intended to strengthen productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, and improve market access for coastal communities.

To support enterprise development, the project includes a business incubation component designed to assist community-led ventures, promote value addition, and strengthen local participation in Blue Economy value chains.

Under the institutional pillar	TASFAM supports fisheries governance reforms, enhanced monitoring and data systems, improved fisheries statistics, and co-management arrangements that actively involve local communities in decision-making. Particular emphasis is placed on women, youth and aquaculture operators as key stakeholders in sector development.
Under the finance pillar	The project seeks to leverage private-sector investment through public-private partnerships. Examples include the rehabilitation of a wharf in Zanzibar and the development of fish processing infrastructure on the mainland, both structured to attract private operators for long-term management. Community-level investments in safer fishing vessels, navigation systems, processing facilities and enterprise development are also supported through structured incubation and financing mechanisms.

- **The project further supports the development of a national blue carbon framework aimed at enabling Tanzania to access emerging carbon finance opportunities linked to marine and coastal ecosystems.**

Conclusion and Key Messages

In concluding his presentation, Dr. Raad emphasized that:

Sustainable Blue Economy requires:	➢ Balancing economic growth, environmental stewardship and social inclusion. ➢ He stressed that healthy marine ecosystems and economic prosperity should not be viewed as competing objectives, but rather as mutually reinforcing goals. ➢ He underscored the importance of ensuring that investments translate into tangible livelihood improvements for coastal communities while safeguarding marine ecosystems for future generations.

2.12 Keynote Presentation 2: Successfully Advancing New Modes of Financing the Blue Economy in Tanzania

Presenter: Prof. Neema Mori, Chairperson, CRDB Bank Group Board

Blue Economy Potential and Emerging Investment Opportunities

Prof. Neema Mori introduced CRDB Bank as a diversified financial services group with a growing footprint in supporting productive sectors of the economy, including emerging opportunities within the Blue Economy. She highlighted the increasing collaboration between financial institutions and academic institutions, noting the important role played by universities with specialized programmes in aquatic sciences and marine studies in advancing Blue Economy research, innovation and capacity development.

She observed that Tanzania possesses significant natural endowments that position it favourably for Blue Economy growth, including more than 1,400 kilometres of coastline, an Exclusive Economic Zone of approximately 230,000 square kilometres, territorial waters covering 64,000 square kilometres, and over 54,000 square kilometres of major inland water bodies. These resources provide substantial opportunities for fisheries, aquaculture, maritime trade, tourism, and other emerging ocean-based industries.



Prof. Mori noted that Tanzania continues to have a strong base of traditional fishing activities, alongside a rapidly growing interest in aquaculture across both mainland and coastal regions. In this context, she emphasized that financial institutions must respond to evolving value chains within fisheries and marine sectors, both locally and internationally.

She highlighted the importance of fully leveraging Tanzania's natural resources and human capital, particularly women and youth, as key drivers of Blue Economy transformation. Emerging opportunities identified included modernization of marine fishing fleets, sustainable fishing

practices, expansion of aquaculture, seaweed farming in Zanzibar, blue technologies, coastal tourism, and marine-based value addition industries.

She further emphasized that significant investment gaps remain in critical infrastructure such as cold storage facilities, fish processing facilities, efficient cargo transportation systems, and value-chain logistics. Addressing these gaps, she noted, is essential for reducing post-harvest losses, improving market access, and enhancing competitiveness across Blue Economy sectors. She also underscored the importance of investing in blue technologies that improve operational efficiency while safeguarding marine ecosystems.

Innovative Financing Approaches for the Blue Economy

Prof. Mori outlined a range of financing instruments and innovative funding mechanisms being applied or developed by CRDB Bank to support Blue Economy growth.

Four financing approaches were identified as particularly relevant:	
a. Blue Bonds	➢ Blue bonds were highlighted as a potential mechanism for mobilising dedicated long-term financing for ocean-related investments. ➢ These instruments can provide resources for sustainable fisheries, marine conservation, coastal resilience, and other initiatives that generate both economic and environmental benefits.
b. Impact Investment	➢ Impact investment was presented as an opportunity to align financial returns with measurable environmental and social outcomes. ➢ This approach is particularly relevant for blue economy enterprises that contribute to ecosystem protection, community livelihoods, and sustainable resource utilisation.
c. Blended Finance	➢ Blended finance was identified as a critical mechanism for reducing investment risks by combining public resources, development finance, concessional funding, and private capital. ➢ Such approaches can improve the attractiveness of emerging sectors, particularly where enterprises face high upfront costs or uncertain returns.
d. Digital Finance	➢ Digital financial solutions were recognised as important tools for expanding access to finance, particularly among small-scale operators and coastal communities. ➢ Digital platforms can improve financial inclusion, strengthen market connections, enhance transparency, and enable new models of service delivery.

- **She highlighted that CRDB has financed more than ten bond instruments and continues to explore innovative financing solutions, including blue bonds designed to mobilize capital specifically for sustainable marine and coastal projects.**
- **She also emphasized the growing role of impact investing, which seeks to generate both financial returns and measurable environmental and social benefits.**

The presentation further highlighted blended finance mechanisms that combine concessional financing from development partners with private capital in order to reduce investment risks and unlock financing for large-scale infrastructure projects such as ports, fisheries facilities, logistics systems, and coastal industrial developments.

Prof. Mori also emphasized the increasing importance of digital finance solutions, including mobile applications and digital platforms that support fisheries operations, facilitate market access, enhance financial inclusion, and improve resource management. She noted that digital technologies have an important role to play in strengthening efficiency, transparency and sustainability across Blue Economy value chains.

In addition, she highlighted the growing relevance of Sharia-compliant financing instruments, including Sukuk bonds, as an important means of expanding financial inclusion and developing financing solutions that are responsive to local cultural and market contexts.

CRDB Bank's Strategic Role in Blue Economy Financing

Prof. Mori explained that CRDB Bank is actively supporting enterprises across the Blue Economy value chain, including small and medium enterprises, large corporates, cooperatives, and community-based initiatives.

She highlighted the **"Inuka na Uchumi wa Bluu" initiative, which supports small-scale fisheries and related enterprises through a combination of credit facilities, financial literacy programmes, capacity-building interventions, and access to productive technologies.** The initiative has been implemented in partnership with government and aims to improve productivity, strengthen livelihoods, and expand participation in the Blue Economy.

She noted that CRDB Bank continues to expand its use of diverse financing instruments, including green bonds, infrastructure bonds and Sukuk instruments, in order to broaden access to capital for Blue Economy investments. The Bank also works closely with development finance institutions and international partners to expand financing opportunities and reduce investment risks.

Prof. Mori highlighted CRDB's recent collaboration with the European Development Bank, which has provided dedicated credit lines to support Blue Economy investments. She further noted that the Bank leverages its international networks, including its Dubai office, to attract investors, mobilize partnerships, and expand investment opportunities for Tanzanian enterprises.



- **She reported that CRDB Bank has extended more than TZS 205.2 billion in financing to support fisheries and related Blue Economy activities in Zanzibar.**
- **These investments span the entire fisheries value chain, including harvesting, preservation, processing, transportation, storage and market access. She noted that these investments have contributed to job creation, income generation, and enhanced productivity within the sector.**

Prof. Mori further highlighted the impact of the Inuka na Uchumi wa Bluu programme, through which substantial investments have been directed toward household-level fisheries and Blue Economy activities. The initiative has enabled beneficiaries to access modern fishing technologies, productive assets and financing opportunities through government-backed guarantees designed to address collateral constraints and operational risks. The programme has benefited more than 50,000 households across Unguja and Pemba.

Partnerships, Inclusion and Strategic Vision

Prof. Mori emphasized that successful Blue Economy financing requires strong collaboration among financial institutions, government agencies, development partners, research institutions, and private-sector actors. She noted that **CRDB works with more than 150 local and international partners, enabling co-financing arrangements, risk-sharing mechanisms, technical assistance programmes, and broader financial inclusion efforts.**

She stressed the importance of integrating land-based and marine-based economic planning, noting that fisheries, agriculture and Blue Economy development are deeply interconnected. In this regard, she highlighted CRDB's strong experience in agricultural financing as a foundation upon which Blue Economy investments can be expanded.

Prof. Mori further emphasized that unlocking the full potential of the Blue Economy requires financing models that deliberately address the needs of small-scale actors, particularly women, youth and coastal communities. She argued that financial inclusion, business development support, financial literacy programmes, and tailored financial products are essential to ensuring that Blue Economy growth translates into broad-based socio-economic benefits rather than being concentrated among a limited number of large investors.

She also underscored the importance of leveraging CRDB's subsidiaries and outreach programmes to provide financial education, build entrepreneurial capacity, and strengthen participation in formal value chains.

Conclusion and Call to Action

Stronger collaboration	➢ **In concluding her presentation, Prof. Mori called for stronger collaboration among government, financial institutions, development partners, researchers and the private sector to develop innovative financing models capable of scaling investment in Blue Economy value chains.**

Sustained Financing and Investment	➢ **She emphasized that financing should not merely provide capital but should actively support transformation through value addition, technological upgrading, productivity improvements, climate resilience, and expanded market access.** ➢ **Achieving a resilient maritime economy will require sustained investment in infrastructure, innovation, skills development, and inclusive financing mechanisms that leave no stakeholder behind.**

CRDB's Commitment	➢ She reaffirmed CRDB Bank's commitment to supporting productive sectors and advancing financial solutions that generate tangible economic impact while contributing to inclusive and sustainable Blue Economy development.

She concluded with CRDB Bank's guiding ethos of shared responsibility and collective progress: **"CRDB ni Mimi, CRDB ni Wewe, CRDB ni Sisi Sote."**

2.13 Key Reflections from the Keynote Presentations

Dr. Jamal Msami, Director of Strategic Research, REPOA

Following the keynote presentations, Dr. Jamal Msami offered a synthesis of the emerging themes and strategic questions arising from the discussions. His reflections highlighted not only the opportunities presented by the Blue Economy, but also the institutional, financial and governance considerations that will determine whether its transformative potential can be realized. He observed that the presentations had sharpened awareness of a critical question: how the Blue Economy can be financed in a manner that is creative, sustainable and inclusive. He noted a growing recognition that oceans, lakes and coastal resources are not peripheral to development, but central to employment creation, livelihoods, food security and long-term economic transformation.

Financing Beyond Capital: Addressing Risk, Readiness and Innovation

Dr. Msami emphasized that while the potential of the Blue Economy is widely acknowledged, potential alone does not automatically translate into impact without deliberate and sustained investment. He noted that the financing discussion is increasingly moving beyond concerns about the availability of funds to broader issues of perceived risk, institutional readiness and the adequacy of conventional financing mechanisms in the face of emerging challenges such as climate change. He highlighted growing interest in innovative financing approaches, including blended finance, blue bonds, public-private partnerships and impact investment models. However, he cautioned that financial innovation does not automatically guarantee sustainability and must therefore be supported by strong governance frameworks, sound regulatory systems and long-term strategic thinking.



Ensuring Inclusive Blue Economy Financing

A key concern raised by Dr. Msami was the issue of inclusion and equity in Blue Economy financing. He questioned who ultimately benefits from Blue Economy investments and cautioned against financing mechanisms that disproportionately favour large capital-intensive projects while excluding small-scale actors, cooperatives and coastal communities. He emphasized that Blue Economy transformation should be people-centred and that financing systems must deliberately support

women, youth, small and medium enterprises and local entrepreneurs who form the backbone of many coastal economies. He therefore called for more targeted financial instruments and improved financial access mechanisms capable of supporting inclusive participation in Blue Economy value chains.

Institutional Capacity as a Prerequisite for Transformation

Dr. Msami further underscored the importance of institutional capacity in enabling effective Blue Economy financing and implementation. He highlighted the need for robust governance frameworks, clear regulatory environments and technical expertise capable of designing, structuring and managing increasingly sophisticated financing instruments. He posed critical questions regarding institutional readiness and whether existing institutions possess the necessary skills, systems and personnel to support the evolving financing landscape. Capacity building in financial structuring, investment management and implementation oversight was identified as a critical priority.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Drawing on the discussions, Dr. Msami identified several priorities for strengthening Blue Economy development. These included improving access to financing for small and medium-scale enterprises and local actors, strengthening coordination among institutions involved in Blue Economy implementation, and scaling up the use of innovative financing mechanisms. He emphasized that the adoption of new financing instruments should be accompanied by adequate institutional preparation and capacity development. He also highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration among government, private-sector actors, development partners and research institutions. Zanzibar was referenced as an example of ongoing progress and practical experience in advancing Blue Economy initiatives.



Strategic Considerations and Way Forward

Situating the discussion within broader national development frameworks, including DIRA 2050 and Zanzibar Vision 2050, Dr. Msami emphasized the importance of partnerships and collective

action. He noted that Blue Economy transformation cannot be achieved by any single actor and requires coordinated efforts among government institutions, communities, private-sector actors, development partners and knowledge institutions. This was a call to action. He further stressed the need to bridge the gap between policy formulation and implementation, ensuring that strategies are translated into practical, measurable and impactful outcomes.

Conclusion and Key Reflection	➢ **Dr. Msami challenged participants to consider whether Tanzania can design and deliver financing mechanisms capable of unlocking the full potential of the Blue Economy while remaining inclusive, environmentally sustainable and economically transformative.** ➢ **He emphasized that the decisions taken today regarding Blue Economy financing will shape not only future investment flows, but also the extent to which coastal communities are able to participate in and benefit from Blue Economy growth.** ➢ **He concluded that the future success of the Blue Economy will depend on balancing innovation, inclusion, sustainability and effective implementation.**

3.0 Plenary Session 1: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustaining the Growth and Transformation of the Blue Economy

Chaired by Hon. Denis Lazaro Londo, Deputy Minister for Industry and Trade, the first plenary session examined the opportunities and challenges shaping Tanzania's pursuit of sustainable Blue Economy transformation. Building upon the strategic direction established during the Opening Plenary, the session combined a keynote presentation with a high-level panel discussion that brought together perspectives from national government institutions, regional organisations and international development partners. Discussions explored policy and institutional frameworks, regional cooperation, governance, implementation experiences and the enabling conditions required to sustain Blue Economy growth. Collectively, the presentations highlighted the importance of coordinated action, strong institutions, regional collaboration and evidence-informed policymaking in translating Tanzania's Blue Economy ambitions into long-term economic, social and environmental outcomes.

3.1 Keynote Presentation 3: The Pursuit of Growth and Transformation of the Blue Economy in Tanzania. Presenter: Dr. Jamal Msami, Director of Strategic Research, REPOA

Tanzania's Blue Economy as a National Growth Agenda

Dr. Jamal Msami opened the session by emphasizing two fundamental departure points for understanding the Blue Economy in Tanzania. First, he argued that the Blue Economy should be viewed not as a sectoral agenda, but as a national growth and transformation agenda that links oceans, coastal resources, lakes, rivers, ports, logistics, tourism, fisheries, energy, ecosystems, research, and regional trade corridors within an integrated aquatic economy. Second, he stressed the need to move beyond discussions centered on resource availability towards a focus on value creation, productivity enhancement, competitiveness, and economic transformation.



Blue Economy Potential and Strategic Position

Dr. Msami highlighted Tanzania's significant natural endowment, including a coastline stretching approximately 1,424 kilometres, a territorial sea of 64,000 square kilometres, an Exclusive Economic Zone covering approximately 223,000 square kilometres, and inland waters accounting for about 6.5 percent of the country's land area.

He noted that the Blue Economy already contributes significantly to economic output, employment, exports, and government revenues. On Mainland Tanzania, fisheries support approximately 180,000 direct jobs and the livelihoods of an estimated 4.5 million people, while tourism contributes between US$3.4 and US$4.2 billion annually and accounts for approximately 17.2 percent of GDP. Tanzania also possesses substantial offshore gas reserves estimated at 57.54 trillion cubic feet.

In Zanzibar, the Blue Economy remains a cornerstone of economic activity, contributing approximately one-third of GDP and employment. The tourism sector contributes between 27 and 30 percent of GDP, while seaweed farming supports thousands of households. Maritime trade remains particularly significant, with approximately 98 percent of trade transported by sea.

He argued that Tanzania occupies a unique strategic position:

At the intersection of three interconnected Blue Economy systems:

1. **The Indian Ocean and Western Indian Ocean system, offering opportunities in ports, shipping, fisheries, tourism, maritime security, ocean science, and marine conservation.**
2. **The freshwater economy, comprising lakes, rivers, wetlands, and inland waterways that support fisheries, biodiversity conservation, inland transport, and livelihoods.**
3. **The regional and global sustainability economy, linking transport corridors, climate finance, natural capital investments, and sustainable trade systems.**

According to Dr. Msami, this strategic position provides Tanzania with a unique comparative advantage for attracting investment, mobilizing blue and green finance, and strengthening its role in regional and international markets.

Opportunity Clusters for Growth and Transformation

Dr. Msami identified five strategic opportunity clusters capable of driving productivity, employment creation, investment, and economic transformation.

The First Cluster

- **Focused on productive fisheries and aquaculture, where investments in modern landing sites, cold chain systems, processing facilities, quality assurance mechanisms, and sustainable fisheries management could significantly increase value addition and competitiveness.**

The Second Cluster

- Centered on seaweed and bio-products, with opportunities extending beyond raw seaweed exports into higher-value products for food processing, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, and animal feed.
- Realizing this potential would require strengthened research systems, quality standards, and processing capacity.

The Third Cluster

- Involved maritime trade, ports, and transport corridors, where Tanzania's strategic location could position the country as a regional gateway for trade, tourism, and investment.
- This would require investments in ports, railways, roads, inland waterways, and multimodal transport systems.

The Fourth Cluster

- Focused on aquatic tourism, encompassing coastal, marine, lake, river, and wetland tourism opportunities.
- Dr. Msami emphasized the need to move beyond traditional each tourism toward integrated tourism experiences built around culture, ecosystems, conservation, and heritage.volved.

The Fifth Cluster

- Highlighted emerging ocean industries, including offshore energy, marine biotechnology, climate services, marine data systems, and digital monitoring technologies.
- Developing these sectors would require investment in research, technical skills, regulatory frameworks, and investment readiness.

Binding Constraints to Blue Economy Transformation

Despite Tanzania's significant opportunities, Dr. Msami observed that progress toward transformation remains constrained by several interconnected challenges.

He identified fragmented governance and coordination as a major obstacle, noting overlapping mandates across institutions, sectors, and jurisdictions, particularly between Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. Such fragmentation contributes to duplication of efforts, weak accountability, slow decision-making, and missed opportunities for integration.

Regulatory gaps and overlaps were also identified as barriers to investment and innovation, particularly in emerging sectors where policy and regulatory frameworks have not kept pace with changing realities.

Key Challenges

Infrastructure and logistics deficits	Remain significant challenges, particularly with regard to cold chain systems, cold storage facilities, maritime transport infrastructure, port services, and connectivity between communities and markets.
	These deficiencies contribute to post-harvest losses, reduced competitiveness, and missed economic opportunities.
Weak investment readiness	Highlighted as another critical challenge.
	While financing opportunities exist, many Blue Economy investments are perceived as high-risk, limiting access to affordable capital and constraining participation by local communities and small-scale enterprises.
Additional challenges	Include limited data and monitoring systems, inadequate technical skills and specialized human resources, and increasing environmental pressures arising from climate change, ecosystem degradation, overfishing, and pollution.

Dr. Msami noted that these constraints reinforce one another, collectively reducing productivity, competitiveness, investment attractiveness, and the pace of transformation.

Policy Choices and the Way Forward

To address these challenges, Dr. Msami proposed a set of strategic policy priorities aimed at accelerating Blue Economy transformation. These included strengthening governance and institutional coordination, streamlining regulatory frameworks, closing infrastructure and logistics gaps, improving investment readiness and access to finance, strengthening data systems and technical capacity, and safeguarding environmental sustainability.

He emphasized that Tanzania's primary challenge is no longer identifying opportunities, but overcoming the delivery bottlenecks that continue to constrain transformation.

In concluding, Dr. Msami stressed that the country's Blue Economy potential remains substantial but underutilized. Unlocking this potential will require deliberate efforts to strengthen systems that drive investment, productivity, competitiveness, inclusion, and sustainability across the Blue Economy value chain.

3.2 Panel Discussion: Perspectives on Advancing Blue Economy Transformation

Following the keynote presentation, a panel discussion brought together policymakers and regional experts to reflect on practical experiences, governance arrangements, implementation challenges, and opportunities for accelerating Blue Economy transformation in Tanzania and the wider East African region. Discussions highlighted lessons from Zanzibar's implementation experience, national policy coordination efforts, regional integration initiatives, and continental perspectives on sustainable Blue Economy development.

3.2.1 Zanzibar's Leadership in Blue Economy Implementation

Presenter: Capt. Hamad Bakar Hamad, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries (MOBEF), Zanzibar

Capt. Hamad Bakar Hamad presented Zanzibar's experience in implementing its Blue Economy agenda, highlighting achievements, challenges, and lessons emerging from the first five years of implementation.

He explained that Zanzibar's Blue Economy framework is anchored around five priority areas: fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, maritime trade, energy (including oil, gas, and renewable energy), and Blue Economy governance. He emphasized that governance remains a critical pillar for ensuring sustainable utilization of marine resources and long-term sector growth.

Progress and Achievements



Capt. Hamad noted that tourism remains Zanzibar's leading economic sector, contributing more than 30 percent of GDP. He reported substantial growth in the sector between 2020 and 2025, with tourist arrivals increasing from approximately 260,000 to more than one million visitors, representing a growth rate of approximately 286 percent. During the same period, bed capacity expanded to over 35,000 beds while the number of hotels increased from approximately 620 to 930 establishments.

The seaweed sector was also highlighted as a significant success story. Zanzibar is currently the largest seaweed producer in Africa and ranks among the leading producers globally. Over the first five years of Blue Economy implementation, seaweed production increased by more than 186 percent while the value of seaweed exports increased by more than 230 percent.

Capt. Hamad further reported that two seaweed processing factories were expected to be commissioned before the end of the year. However, the facilities would only be capable of processing approximately 40 percent of total production, leaving significant opportunities for additional investment in processing and value addition.

The fisheries sector has similarly recorded positive outcomes. Through collaboration between the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and financial institutions, particularly CRDB Bank, a blended financing scheme supported the acquisition of 127 fishing vessels. As a result, fish catches increased by more than 110 percent while the value of catches increased by over 210 percent. He cited this as evidence that targeted support to local producers can generate substantial economic returns.

Challenges

Despite these achievements, Capt. Hamad identified several challenges affecting Blue Economy development.

Financing	Remains a major constraint, with many Blue Economy investments perceived as high-risk ventures, resulting in elevated financing costs and limited access to affordable capital.
Marine governance & maritime security	Were also identified as ongoing challenges requiring cooperation at local, national, and regional levels.
Climate change	Continues to threaten marine ecosystems, including coral reefs and traditional fishing grounds, while marine safety remains a critical concern for coastal communities.
Financing models & financial products	The importance of ensuring that financing models and financial products are compatible with local cultural contexts, including Sharia-compliant financing arrangements that are appropriate for Zanzibar's social and cultural environment.

Recommendations and Way Forward

Collaboration	**Capt. Hamad stressed the importance of collaboration among government institutions, financial institutions, research organizations, and development partners to develop customized solutions tailored to local realities rather than relying on imported models.**
Climate Resilience	**Emphasized the need to strengthen climate resilience, invest in deeper-sea fishing capabilities, and support local communities in accessing emerging opportunities within the Blue Economy.**
Importance of mindset change	**Concluded by highlighting the importance of mindset change, noting that Blue Economy transformation requires innovation, entrepreneurship, and proactive engagement rather than passive reliance on natural resources alone.**

3.2.2 The Pursuit of Blue Economy Transformation in Tanzania—Presenter: Ms. Magdalena Ngotolainyo, Acting Director, Blue Economy Department, Vice President's Office (Union and Environment)

Ms. Magdalena Ngotolainyo presented Tanzania's national approach to Blue Economy transformation, outlining the policy framework, implementation architecture, opportunities, challenges, and priority actions guiding the country's Blue Economy agenda.



National Policy and Institutional Framework

She emphasized that Tanzania views the Blue Economy not merely as a mechanism for utilizing marine and aquatic resources, but as a strategic development agenda aimed at accelerating economic transformation, generating employment, enhancing food security, promoting trade and investment, and safeguarding ecosystems for future generations.

The Blue Economy agenda is anchored within DIRA 2050, which identifies the sector as a transformative pillar of national development. At the policy level, implementation is guided by the National Blue Economy Policy launched in 2024 and its accompanying ten-year implementation strategy covering the period 2024–2034.

Ms. Ngotolainyo highlighted the development of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Guidelines as an important tool for ensuring sustainable and coordinated utilization of marine resources. She further noted that more than 28 ministries and sectors derive benefits from Blue Economy activities, underscoring the cross-sectoral nature of the agenda.

To strengthen coordination, the Government has established a Blue Economy coordination framework under the Vice President's Office comprising ministerial, inter-ministerial, and technical committees responsible for facilitating collaboration and harmonized implementation across sectors.

Opportunities

According to Ms. Ngotolainyo, Tanzania possesses substantial opportunities arising from its:

Resources	**Extensive marine and freshwater resources, supportive policy environment, and growing institutional frameworks.**
Policy instruments	**The existence of dedicated policy instruments, implementation strategies, and coordination mechanisms provides a conducive environment for investment and sector growth.**
Coordination structures	**Highlighted the coordination structures established under the Vice President's Office as an important opportunity for improving policy coherence and implementation effectiveness.**

Challenges

Despite these opportunities, Ms. Ngotolainyo acknowledged persistent challenges, including:

Key challenges	Limited research and data systems, marine pollution, ecosystem degradation, climate change impacts, illegal fishing activities, and insufficient financial and technical capacity.
Other challenges	Governance and coordination systems still require strengthening, particularly in relation to policy harmonization, accountability, and implementation effectiveness.

Policy Recommendations

To address these challenges, she **recommended strengthening research institutions, promoting science, technology and innovation, enhancing community participation, expanding financing mechanisms, strengthening policy and legal harmonization, improving accountability, and investing in capacity development for women, youth, and coastal communities**.

Conclusion

Ms. Ngotolainyo concluded that the future of Tanzania's Blue Economy will depend on strengthened institutional coordination, effective governance of offshore resources, investment in science and innovation, and the empowerment of communities. She expressed confidence that Tanzania possesses the potential to become a leading example of sustainable Blue Economy development within the region.

3.2.3 The East African Experience and the New Drive on the Region's Blue Economy Strategic Plan—Presenter: Dr. Elysee Nzohabonayo, Director, Aquaculture Management and Development, Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO)

Dr. Elysee Nzohabonayo provided a regional perspective on Blue Economy implementation within the East African Community (EAC), highlighting achievements, challenges, and the strategic direction of the region's emerging Blue Economy agenda.

Regional Progress and Opportunities

Dr. Nzohabonayo noted that while progress is occurring across the region, implementation remains uneven among partner states. He observed that East Africa possesses a strong natural and economic foundation for Blue Economy development, including major freshwater systems such as Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika, extensive river networks, and access to the Indian Ocean.

He reported that Lake Victoria produces more than one million tonnes of fish annually and supports the livelihoods of over three million people. Fish exports generate approximately US$1 billion annually, while tourism contributes around 10 percent of regional GDP and approximately 7 percent of jobs.

Regional Cooperation and Success Stories

Regional collaboration was identified as one of the strongest drivers of progress. Institutions such as the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, the Lake Tanganyika Authority, and the Nile Basin Initiative have played important roles in promoting joint fisheries management, collaborative research, monitoring systems, and coordinated responses to illegal fishing.



He also highlighted sector-specific successes, including the rapid growth of aquaculture, expansion of seaweed farming in Tanzania and Zanzibar, and improvements in transport and port infrastructure across the region.

Challenges

Despite these successes, Dr. Nzohabonayo identified persistent challenges including:

- inadequate financing mechanisms, weak monitoring systems, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and limited recognition of freshwater ecosystems within Blue Economy planning frameworks.He noted significant differences in institutional capacity and levels of policy implementation among partner states, resulting in uneven progress across the region.

The New Regional Strategy

Dr. Nzohabonayo outlined the emerging EAC Blue Economy Strategy, which seeks to shift the region from fragmented sectoral approaches toward an integrated and implementation-focused framework.

The strategy emphasizes three major shifts: integration across sectors, recognition of freshwater systems as core components of the Blue Economy, and stronger focus on implementation through clearly defined actions, timelines, and institutional responsibilities.

Conclusion

He concluded that the Blue Economy already contributes significantly to economic development across East Africa. However, realizing its full potential will require scaling successful initiatives, strengthening institutions, increasing investment, and deepening regional collaboration.

3.2.4 UNECA's Contribution to Sustainable Implementation of Blue Economy Actions in Tanzania—Presenter: Dr. Andrew Mold, Director, UNECA East Africa Office

Dr. Andrew Mold presented a continental perspective on Blue Economy development, drawing on UNECA's experience supporting countries across Africa in designing and implementing Blue Economy strategies.

Africa's Blue Economy Potential

Dr. Mold observed that Africa possesses vast marine and freshwater resources, including approximately one-quarter of global freshwater resources. Despite these endowments, he argued that the continent continues to underutilize its Blue Economy potential.



He emphasized that the African Union's Blue Economy framework extends beyond marine resources to include lakes, rivers, wetlands, and inland waterways, requiring an integrated and holistic approach to resource management and development.

Fisheries, Aquaculture and Value Addition

Using regional and global comparisons, Dr. Mold highlighted the significant gap between Africa's resource potential and actual production levels. While Asia accounts for approximately 75 percent of global fish and seafood production, Africa contributes only a small share despite its abundant aquatic resources.

He noted that East Africa continues to lag in aquaculture development and value addition. Seychelles was highlighted as an example of successful value addition, particularly through its tuna processing industry, which has generated employment and export earnings through industrial-scale fish processing.

Dr. Mold argued that significant opportunities remain for expanding aquaculture production, strengthening regional value chains, and increasing value addition within fisheries and seafood industries.

Maritime Governance and Regional Cooperation

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing was identified as a major challenge across the region, resulting in significant economic losses and pressure on fish stocks. Dr. Mold emphasized the need for stronger maritime governance, improved monitoring systems, enhanced surveillance capacity, and deeper regional cooperation to address these challenges.

He further advocated for greater participation in regional maritime security arrangements and stronger collaboration in managing shared aquatic resources.

Conclusion

Dr. Mold concluded that Africa's Blue Economy future will depend on its ability to transform resource endowments into productive and competitive value chains. He emphasized the need to strengthen aquaculture, improve value addition, expand regional cooperation, and better utilize both marine and freshwater resources to support economic growth, food security, and sustainable development.

3.2.5 Plenary Discussion

Following the panel presentations, participants engaged in an interactive discussion that explored practical pathways for ensuring that Blue Economy development translates into tangible benefits for communities while safeguarding environmental sustainability.

Community Participation, Ownership and Local Governance

A recurring concern throughout the discussion was whether local communities are sufficiently represented within Blue Economy planning and implementation processes. Participants emphasized that communities should not merely be beneficiaries of Blue Economy interventions, but active participants in decision-making, implementation, and stewardship of marine and aquatic resources.

Questions were raised regarding the mechanisms through which coastal communities, local government authorities, and community-based structures are integrated into planning processes. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that community voices are represented within technical

and policy coordination mechanisms and that local knowledge is incorporated into resource management and conservation efforts.

Responding to these concerns, Ms. Magdalena Ngotolainyo noted that implementation would utilize existing governance structures, including local government systems, environmental committees, and community-based platforms. She emphasized that awareness programmes would be rolled out from national to household level and that stakeholder participation remains central to implementation of the Blue Economy Policy and its associated strategies.

Human Capital Development and Workforce Readiness

Participants highlighted the importance of human capital development as a critical enabler of Blue Economy transformation. Drawing on evidence from recent assessments of educational outcomes in coastal communities, concerns were raised regarding workforce preparedness and the extent to which current investments are aligned with the long-term skills requirements envisioned under DIRA 2050.

The discussion emphasized the need to invest not only in infrastructure and financing but also in education, **skills development, and** career pathways that prepare young people to participate in emerging Blue Economy sectors.

Panelists highlighted ongoing efforts to promote Blue Economy education and training, including specialized programmes in maritime studies, fisheries, aquaculture, and seafaring. Participants stressed the importance of expanding awareness among young people regarding emerging opportunities beyond traditional occupations and fostering interest in non-traditional Blue Economy careers.

Financing, Investment Readiness and Inclusive Growth

Financing emerged as a major theme throughout the discussion. Participants questioned how financing mechanisms can be structured to ensure that local communities, small-scale producers, and emerging enterprises are able to benefit from Blue Economy investments.

Concerns were raised regarding perceptions of Blue Economy investments as high-risk ventures, resulting in high financing costs and limited accessibility for local actors. Participants also questioned whether existing financing mechanisms are sufficiently inclusive and whether communities possess the capacity and readiness required to take advantage of available opportunities.

In response, Dr. Elysee Nzohabonayo emphasized the importance of developing financing mechanisms that accommodate the unique characteristics of Blue Economy sectors, noting that traditional financing approaches may not always be suitable. He also highlighted the role of capacity building, technical support, and institutional strengthening in improving investment readiness among producers and entrepreneurs.

Policy Harmonization, Institutional Coordination and Prioritization

A number of participants raised questions regarding coordination among the numerous institutions involved in Blue Economy development and the practical challenges associated with implementing an integrated approach across sectors.

Discussions highlighted the complexity of the Blue Economy agenda, which encompasses fisheries, tourism, maritime transport, conservation, energy, trade, and other interconnected sectors. Participants questioned whether priority areas should be further streamlined and sought clarification regarding how policy harmonization would be achieved across ministries and agencies.

Responding to these concerns, Ms. Magdalena Ngotolainyo noted that the Blue Economy Policy identifies priority sectors and clearly assigns responsibilities across implementing institutions. She emphasized that while many Blue Economy activities existed before the adoption of the policy, the challenge now lies in aligning institutions, strengthening communication mechanisms, and ensuring coordinated implementation across sectors.

Participants generally agreed that effective implementation would depend on improved institutional coordination, accountability, and communication among stakeholders.

Sustainability, Climate Change and Integrated Ecosystem Management

Several contributions emphasized the need for a holistic approach to Blue Economy development that recognizes the interconnectedness of marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Particular attention was drawn to experiences from the Rufiji Delta, where participants argued that coastal and marine resource management cannot be separated from land-based activities occurring within surrounding landscapes. Concerns were raised regarding land degradation, sediment loss, and other environmental pressures that directly affect coastal ecosystems and marine productivity.

Participants also highlighted the growing impacts of climate change on fisheries, aquaculture, seaweed farming, and coastal livelihoods. Questions were raised regarding community preparedness, early warning systems, marine safety awareness, and ongoing research aimed at understanding climate-related risks facing coastal communities.

The discussion reinforced the importance of adopting integrated approaches that combine ecosystem conservation, climate resilience, community participation, and sustainable resource management.

Regional Cooperation and Knowledge Sharing

Participants and panelists acknowledged the growing importance of regional cooperation in addressing shared challenges such as illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, maritime security, environmental management, and trade facilitation.

Questions were raised regarding how existing East African regional institutions could be better utilized to support implementation and unlock opportunities associated with the Blue Economy.

Panelists highlighted the role of regional organizations in promoting policy harmonization, joint research, capacity building, and coordinated responses to trans-boundary challenges. The discussion underscored the view that regional collaboration remains a critical enabler of sustainable Blue Economy development and deeper economic integration across East Africa.

4.0 Plenary Session 2: Financing the Blue Economy's Opportunities for Growth



Chaired by Dr. Blandina Kilama, Deputy Executive Secretary of the National Planning Commission, the second plenary session examined the financing mechanisms required to unlock Tanzania's Blue Economy potential and translate policy ambitions into sustainable investment. Building upon the opportunities and challenges identified during the previous session, the plenary brought together perspectives from central banks, commercial financial institutions and development partners to explore innovative financing models, investment readiness, public-private partnerships and the enabling financial architecture needed to support Blue Economy growth. Discussions highlighted the importance of strengthening governance, reducing investment risk, expanding access to finance and mobilising both public and private capital to support inclusive, resilient and sustainable Blue Economy development. Collectively, the presentations demonstrated that financing is not merely about increasing the availability of capital, but about creating the institutional and policy conditions that enable investment to generate long-term economic, social and environmental value.

4.1 Keynote Presentation 4: Sustainable Mobilization of Blue Economy Funding – The Namibian Leadership—Presenter: Mr. Ebson Uanguta, Governor, Bank of Namibia

Mr. Ebson Uanguta commenced his presentation by acknowledging the presence of the High Commissioner of Namibia to Tanzania and East Africa, H.E. Gabriel Sinimbo, whose participation throughout the workshop reflected Namibia's continued engagement in regional dialogue on Blue Economy development. He then shared Namibia's experience in mobilizing sustainable finance for the Blue Economy, highlighting the role of governance, financial sector regulation, and institutional coordination in unlocking investment and supporting sustainable Blue Economy development. Drawing on Namibia's experience, he emphasized that sustainable financing is not merely a funding

challenge, but a broader governance and implementation challenge that requires coordinated action across multiple sectors and institutions.

Why the Blue Economy Matters to Namibia

Mr. Uanguta noted that the Blue Economy is a significant contributor to Namibia's economy, accounting for approximately 15–20 percent of GDP through sectors such as fisheries, tourism, mining, renewable energy, maritime transport, water resources, bio-prospecting, and blue carbon initiatives. The sector contributes around 20 percent of national export earnings and provides employment opportunities for thousands of Namibians, with the fisheries sector alone employing more than 18,000 people.

Beyond its direct economic contribution, he highlighted the Blue Economy's role in supporting food security, tourism development, logistics, and trade. Recognizing its strategic importance, Namibia has integrated the Blue Economy into its national development agenda through Vision 2030, National Development Plan 6, and its commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals.

He noted that the country's development ambitions include expanding renewable energy generation, increasing employment opportunities, strengthening fisheries production, and enhancing the contribution of Blue Economy sectors to national economic transformation.

The Blue Economy and the Mandate of the Central Bank

Although the Bank of Namibia does not directly implement Blue Economy programmes, Mr. Uanguta emphasized that the sector is closely linked to the Bank's mandate and broader macroeconomic stability objectives.

He explained that Blue Economy sectors influence food prices, economic growth, export earnings, foreign exchange reserves, payment systems, and financial sector stability. Fisheries, tourism, and maritime transport contribute significantly to export performance and foreign exchange inflows, both of which are critical to the functioning of the national economy and the effectiveness of monetary policy.



He further observed that climate-related risks increasingly affect Blue Economy sectors and therefore have implications for financial institutions and investors. Rising sea temperatures, changing fish migration patterns, and extreme weather events can undermine productivity, disrupt value chains, and weaken loan portfolios, creating risks for the banking sector and broader economy.

Sustainable Finance and Climate Risk Management

Mr. Uanguta highlighted the growing importance of climate-related financial risk management within the financial sector. He noted that the Bank of Namibia has developed a sustainable finance framework to support the transition towards a green and blue economy while strengthening the resilience of the banking sector.

As part of these efforts, the Bank issued guidelines on climate-related financial risks and disclosure requirements in 2023. These guidelines assist financial institutions in identifying, assessing, and managing climate-related risks while promoting greater transparency and accountability in lending and investment decisions.



He explained that such measures help create an enabling environment for commercial banks and investors while supporting the development of innovative financing instruments, including green and blue bonds. Similar opportunities exist for other African central banks to integrate Blue Economy considerations into financial sector regulation and macroeconomic planning.

Governance as the Foundation for Investment

A central theme of the presentation was the importance of governance in attracting and sustaining investment.

Mr. Uanguta argued that policy frameworks and strategic plans alone are insufficient unless accompanied by effective coordination mechanisms and implementation structures. He emphasized that governance is where policy ambitions are translated into practical outcomes.

According to Mr. Uanguta, sound governance increases investor confidence and improves the flow of capital into strategic sectors. Conversely, weak governance, fragmented decision-making, and inadequate accountability mechanisms can discourage investment and undermine development outcomes.

He stressed that institutions operating within the Blue Economy must be governed effectively if they are to attract long-term financing and deliver sustainable results.

Namibia's Blue Economy Governance Structure

To illustrate this point, Mr. Uanguta outlined Namibia's governance architecture for Blue Economy development.

The National Planning Commission provides overall coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of Blue Economy initiatives, while sector ministries implement specific mandates relating to fisheries, water resources, environmental management, tourism, energy, transport, and trade.

He explained that this arrangement helps reduce fragmentation across government institutions, promotes accountability, and strengthens coherence in policy implementation. The existence of a central coordinating body ensures that sectoral interventions contribute to broader national development objectives while minimizing duplication of effort.

Financing Channels and Strategic Partnerships

Mr. Uanguta identified several financing channels supporting Blue Economy development in Namibia, including public investment, public-private partnerships, blue bonds, blue carbon initiatives, climate investment funds, and development partner support.

He highlighted the role of strategic partnerships in mobilizing finance and strengthening implementation capacity. Examples included collaboration with academic institutions, regional organizations, and specialized bodies such as the Benguela Current Convention Secretariat, which supports marine research, resource management, and regional cooperation.

He also cited the Terminal Investment Namibia port concession as an example of how strategic infrastructure investments and public-private partnerships can attract significant private capital while supporting broader economic development objectives.

Challenges and Lessons

Despite notable progress, Mr. Uanguta acknowledged that Namibia continues to face several challenges that constrain Blue Economy development. These include:

- limited internationally recognized maritime and fisheries qualifications, inadequate value addition within fisheries value chains, high costs associated with aquaculture and marine technologies, and infrastructure bottlenecks that affect productivity and competitiveness.

He emphasized the importance of investing in human capital development, particularly in specialized maritime and Blue Economy skills, while strengthening infrastructure and expanding opportunities for value addition.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr. Uanguta emphasized that:	1. Sustainable Blue Economy financing is both a development issue and a financial stability issue. He argued that success depends not only on the availability of capital, but also on the existence of sound governance systems, strong institutions, climate-resilient financing frameworks, and effective implementation mechanisms.
	2. He underscored the importance of regional cooperation, noting that no country can effectively manage fisheries resources, maritime security, or climate-related risks in isolation. Partnerships with universities, research institutions, financial institutions, and regional bodies were identified as essential for building the skills, innovation, and coordination required to support long-term Blue Economy transformation.
	3. He challenged institutions to move beyond policy commitments and take concrete steps towards implementation, emphasizing that the future of the Blue Economy depends on translating strategic ambitions into investable, skill-supported, and well-governed development outcomes.

4.2 Keynote Presentation 5: New Bank Financing for the Blue Economy – Driving Sustainable Finance and Community Impact Across Tanzania's Coastal Regions

Presenter: ***Ms. Hellen Dalali, Head of Sustainability, Equity Bank Tanzania***

Ms. Hellen Dalali presented Equity Bank's approach to supporting Blue Economy development through a combination of commercial finance, sustainability initiatives, and community-focused interventions. Drawing on the Bank's regional experience, she demonstrated how financial institutions can play a catalytic role in expanding access to finance, strengthening enterprise development, and supporting sustainable livelihoods within coastal communities.

Throughout her presentation, she emphasized that financing alone is insufficient to transform the Blue Economy. Instead, meaningful transformation requires a combination of financial services, technical support, entrepreneurship development, and social impact interventions that address the realities faced by communities operating within Blue Economy value chains.



Equity Bank's Sustainability and Impact Model

Ms. Dalali explained that Equity Bank operates across six African countries, including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of

Congo, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. Beyond conventional banking services, the Equity Group includes complementary entities focused on insurance, investment, technology, and social development.

She noted that sustainability is embedded within the Bank's operating model, which is anchored on three mutually reinforcing pillars: commercial finance, sustainability, and social impact. This integrated approach recognizes that financial inclusion and economic growth are most effective when accompanied by investments in human development, environmental stewardship, and community resilience.

According to Ms. Dalali, this model is particularly relevant to the Blue Economy, where many actors operate in vulnerable environments and require support that extends beyond access to capital.

Inclusive Blue Economy Financing

A central theme of the presentation was the need to ensure that Blue Economy financing reaches communities and enterprises that are often excluded from traditional financial systems. Ms. Dalali observed that many Blue Economy actors, including artisanal fishers, seaweed farmers, women entrepreneurs, and small-scale enterprises, face significant barriers to accessing formal financial services. These barriers often include limited financial literacy, inadequate business records, lack of collateral, and limited engagement with formal banking institutions.

To address these challenges, Equity Bank has adopted a proactive outreach model that brings financial services closer to communities. Rather than waiting for potential clients to visit banking halls, the Bank engages directly with coastal communities and Blue Economy enterprises within their operating environments.

Financial literacy and entrepreneurship training form a key component of this approach. These programmes provide practical skills in record keeping, savings, business management, and financial planning, helping participants strengthen their enterprises and improve their readiness to access financing.

Ms. Dalali emphasized that building the capacity of communities to effectively utilize financial services is just as important as providing access to credit.

Supporting Women and Vulnerable Groups

Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that women and youth are able to participate meaningfully in Blue Economy opportunities.

Ms. Dalali noted that women often face additional barriers in accessing finance and business opportunities. In response, Equity Bank has established dedicated financing windows and tailored support mechanisms designed to strengthen women's participation within Blue Economy value chains.

These initiatives are complemented by entrepreneurship training, mentorship, and financial education programmes aimed at improving enterprise performance and long-term economic resilience.

Addressing Collateral Constraints

Recognizing that collateral requirements remain one of the greatest obstacles to accessing finance, Equity Bank has introduced guarantee facilities designed to reduce barriers for borrowers.

Under the programme, guarantee coverage extends up to 70 percent for women and youth-led enterprises, 60 percent for growth-stage businesses, and 50 percent for established enterprises. Ms. Dalali explained that the facility is impact-driven and does not impose additional costs on borrowers, enabling enterprises with viable business opportunities but limited collateral to access financing that would otherwise remain unavailable.

Tailored Financial Solutions for Blue Economy Enterprises

Ms. Dalali outlined a range of financing products designed to meet the diverse needs of Blue Economy enterprises.

These include term loans, working capital facilities, asset financing arrangements, and trade finance solutions tailored to businesses operating across fisheries, aquaculture, seaweed farming, marine transport, and related value chains.



She highlighted that many Blue Economy investments are capital intensive, requiring financing for fishing vessels, cold storage facilities, processing equipment, and other infrastructure necessary to improve productivity and competitiveness.

By tailoring financial products to the realities of Blue Economy enterprises, the Bank aims to support business growth while contributing to broader sector transformation.

Partnerships and Risk-Sharing Mechanisms

Ms. Dalali highlighted the importance of partnerships in expanding access to finance and reducing investment risks.

Among these is Equity Bank's partnership with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), which combines technical assistance with a risk-sharing facility designed to support investments in sectors often perceived as high-risk, including the Blue Economy.

The programme, currently implemented in Tanzania and Kenya, seeks to expand financing opportunities while strengthening the capacity of enterprises to access and effectively utilize investment capital.

In addition to facilitating access to finance, the partnership provides business development support and technical assistance to improve enterprise performance and investment readiness.

Community Impact and Environmental Stewardship

Beyond financing, Ms. Dalali highlighted several initiatives aimed at generating social and environmental impact within coastal communities.

These include financial literacy programmes, entrepreneurship development initiatives, post-harvest management training for seaweed farmers, and community-based environmental conservation activities.

She cited examples of training programmes conducted with women's groups in coastal areas – Kilwa, where participants received both financial management support and technical guidance on improving seaweed production and post-harvest handling practices.

Environmental stewardship was also presented as a key component of the Bank's sustainability agenda. Quarterly beach clean-up campaigns and environmental awareness initiatives are implemented in partnership with local communities, helping to promote marine conservation while reinforcing the long-term sustainability of Blue Economy activities.

Call for Partnerships

Ms. Dalali emphasized the importance of collaboration in achieving meaningful Blue Economy transformation. She called on government institutions, development partners, financial institutions, private sector actors, and civil society organizations to work together in expanding access to finance, strengthening community resilience, and promoting environmental sustainability.

While individual institutions can make important contributions, she noted that the scale of opportunity within the Blue Economy requires collective action and strategic partnerships capable of reaching more communities and generating broader impact.

Conclusion

Ms. Dalali concluded that financing alone cannot transform the Blue Economy

1. **Sustainable transformation requires a combination of accessible financial services, entrepreneurship development, technical support, environmental stewardship, and inclusive participation.**
2. **Her presentation demonstrated that financial institutions can play a transformative role not only by providing capital, but also by building the skills, confidence, and resilience required for communities and enterprises to participate effectively in the Blue Economy.**
3. **Through integrated approaches that combine finance with social impact and community empowerment, she argued that the Blue Economy can become a powerful vehicle for inclusive growth and sustainable development.**

4.3 Panel Discussion: Perspectives on Financing the Blue Economy

Following the keynote presentations, a panel discussion brought together representatives from development finance and commercial banking institutions to share practical experiences and lessons on financing Blue Economy development. The discussion explored the role of public and private financing, climate resilience, sustainable fisheries management, risk-sharing mechanisms, and value chain financing in supporting Blue Economy transformation. Discussions highlighted ongoing investments in Tanzania and the wider region, emerging financing innovations, and approaches aimed at expanding access to finance for coastal communities, small-scale producers, and Blue Economy enterprises.

4.3.1 World Bank's Sustained Funding of Blue Economy Interventions in Tanzania and Africa

Presenter: Ms. Charlotte De Fontaubert, Senior Fisheries Specialist, World Bank

Ms. Charlotte De Fontaubert outlined the World Bank's contribution to Blue Economy development in Tanzania and the wider Western Indian Ocean region. She highlighted the Bank's support for sustainable fisheries management, climate resilience, marine resource conservation, and aquaculture development, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that Blue Economy growth is both environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive.

Throughout her remarks, she underscored the growing influence of climate change on marine ecosystems and the need for investment approaches that simultaneously strengthen livelihoods, protect marine resources, and enhance resilience among coastal communities.

The World Bank's Blue Economy Vision

Ms. De Fontaubert noted that the World Bank defines the Blue Economy as the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and job creation while preserving the health of marine ecosystems.

She emphasized that economic development and environmental sustainability should not be viewed as competing objectives. Rather, sustainable management of marine ecosystems is essential for ensuring the long-term viability of Blue Economy sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism.



The World Bank's interventions therefore seek to balance economic opportunities with environmental stewardship, ensuring that marine resources continue to support present and future generations.

Supporting Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Development

A major focus of the World Bank's engagement in Tanzania is strengthening the sustainability and productivity of marine fisheries and aquaculture systems.

Ms. De Fontaubert highlighted the Tanzania Scaling-up Sustainable Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Project (TASFAM), a US$117 million initiative comprising approximately US$112 million in financing and an additional US$5 million trust fund contribution.

The project focuses on three interconnected priorities:

- **Developing a sustainable and climate-resilient Blue Economy;**
- **Improving the management and sustainability of marine fisheries; and**
- **Scaling up climate-resilient marine aquaculture.**

She noted that the project places strong emphasis on artisanal fishing communities, private sector actors, women, youth, and civil society organizations, reflecting the importance of inclusive participation in Blue Economy transformation.

Climate Resilience as a Development Imperative

Climate change emerged as a central theme throughout Ms. De Fontaubert's presentation.

She observed that changing ocean conditions are increasingly affecting fisheries, marine ecosystems, and coastal livelihoods, requiring governments, communities, and development partners to adapt their approaches to Blue Economy development.

Accordingly, climate resilience has become a core feature of World Bank-supported interventions, particularly in fisheries management and aquaculture development.

Her remarks reinforced a broader workshop theme that sustainable Blue Economy development depends not only on increasing productivity but also on strengthening the resilience of marine ecosystems and coastal communities.

Tanzania's Emerging Regional Leadership

Ms. De Fontaubert highlighted Tanzania's growing role as a leader in Blue Economy innovation within the Western Indian Ocean region.

She noted that several approaches and innovations developed in Tanzania are being adopted elsewhere in the region. As an example, she cited the use of fisheries data collection and statistical methodologies developed in Tanzania that are now informing similar initiatives in other countries.

This experience demonstrates Tanzania's potential not only as a beneficiary of Blue Economy investments but also as a source of knowledge and innovation for regional Blue Economy development.

Financing Innovation and Blue Bonds

Reflecting on innovative financing mechanisms, Ms. De Fontaubert discussed the experience of Seychelles, which issued one of the world's first Blue Bonds.

While acknowledging the growing interest in Blue Bonds as a financing instrument, she noted that such mechanisms are often complex and require strong governance arrangements, robust project preparation, and effective implementation systems.

Her remarks highlighted both the opportunities and challenges associated with innovative Blue Economy financing and reinforced the importance of building institutional capacity alongside financing mechanisms.

Conclusion

Ms. De Fontaubert reaffirmed the World Bank's commitment to supporting sustainable Blue Economy development in Tanzania and the wider region.

Successful Blue Economy transformation requires:	1. **Integrated approaches that combine sustainable resource management, climate resilience, community participation, and long-term investment.**
	2. **Through initiatives such as TASFAM and regional cooperation programmes, the World Bank seeks to support a Blue Economy that generates economic opportunities while safeguarding the marine ecosystems upon which those opportunities depend.**

4.3.2 Pursuing New Bank Financing for the Blue Economy in Tanzania

Presenter: Mr. Maregesi A. Shaabani, Head of Agribusiness, CRDB Bank PLC

Mr. Maregesi A. Shaabani presented CRDB Bank's experience in supporting investments within Tanzania's Blue Economy through innovative financing approaches, strategic partnerships, and value chain development. His presentation emphasized that unlocking the full potential of the Blue Economy requires more than the availability of capital. Rather, it requires financing systems that are responsive to the realities faced by producers, entrepreneurs, and investors operating within Blue Economy value chains.

Throughout his presentation, he highlighted the need to move beyond conventional financing approaches and adopt innovative mechanisms that reduce barriers to investment, strengthen enterprise capacity, and improve participation across the Blue Economy ecosystem.

Tanzania's Untapped Blue Economy Potential

Mr. Maregesi began by highlighting Tanzania's considerable Blue Economy endowments. He noted that the country possesses extensive inland water bodies, a coastline stretching over 1,400 kilometres, and an Exclusive Economic Zone covering approximately 230,000 square kilometres.

In addition to its marine resources, Tanzania's strategic location within the Great Lakes region positions it favourably to benefit from fisheries, maritime trade, aquaculture, tourism, and other Blue Economy opportunities. These natural advantages, he argued, provide a strong foundation for expanding economic growth, employment creation, and investment.

However, despite this considerable potential, many Blue Economy activities continue to operate below their productive capacity, limiting their contribution to national development.

Bridging the Gap Between Potential and Investment

According to Mr. Maregesi, one of the major challenges facing the sector is the gap between available opportunities and the ability of investors and producers to fully capitalize on them.



Many small-scale fishers and entrepreneurs continue to rely on traditional production methods and lack access to modern equipment, technologies, and financing solutions that would enable them to increase productivity and competitiveness.

He observed that while opportunities exist across multiple Blue Economy value chains, access to finance remains constrained by a range of factors including inadequate collateral, perceived investment risks, limited technical capacity, and weak market linkages.

Addressing these barriers, he argued, requires new approaches that move beyond traditional lending models.

Rethinking Blue Economy Financing

A central theme of the presentation was the need to rethink how financing is structured and delivered within the Blue Economy.

Mr. Maregesi explained that CRDB has established dedicated financing mechanisms for agriculture and Blue Economy investments through specialized agribusiness teams operating across the country. However, financing alone is not sufficient to support sector transformation.

The Bank therefore works with local and international partners to mobilize capital, strengthen technical capacity, provide insurance solutions, and reduce investment risks through guarantee schemes and other innovative financing mechanisms.

He emphasized that many viable investments fail to materialize not because opportunities are lacking, but because financing systems are often unable to accommodate the realities faced by Blue Economy actors. Innovative financing arrangements can therefore play a critical role in expanding participation and unlocking investment.

Building an Ecosystem for Investment

Mr. Maregesi stressed that successful financing requires the development of an ecosystem that supports investors throughout the value chain.

This includes access to training, technical assistance, equipment, market information, insurance products, and reliable market opportunities. Financing becomes more effective when it is integrated with broader support systems that strengthen enterprise performance and reduce investment risks.

He noted that CRDB's approach extends beyond the provision of credit to include capacity building, business development support, and partnerships that help producers improve productivity and connect with markets.

By addressing multiple constraints simultaneously, such approaches increase the likelihood that investments will generate sustainable returns.

The Inuka na Uchumi wa Bluu Initiative

As an example of this approach, Mr. Maregesi highlighted CRDB's partnership with the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar through the Inuka na Uchumi wa Bluu initiative.

The programme utilizes government-backed guarantees to support financing for Blue Economy enterprises and entrepreneurs. Beneficiaries are organized into groups, provided with training, connected to financing opportunities, and supported with access to equipment and productive assets.

According to Mr. Maregesi, the initiative has generated encouraging results, demonstrating that when communities are provided with appropriate support, financing, and capacity development, productivity and economic outcomes can improve significantly.

The initiative also illustrates the importance of partnerships between government institutions and financial service providers in reducing investment risks and expanding access to finance.

Supporting Women, Youth, and Emerging Enterprises

Mr. Maregesi highlighted the role of the CRDB Foundation in supporting women, youth, and emerging entrepreneurs.

Through financial literacy programmes, entrepreneurship training, technical assistance, and seed capital support, the Foundation seeks to strengthen the capacity of early-stage enterprises and improve their prospects for growth.

These interventions recognize that many entrepreneurs require more than financing alone. Business development support, mentorship, and skills development are often necessary to enable enterprises to access financing successfully and manage investments sustainably.

He emphasized that supporting these groups is critical for ensuring that Blue Economy opportunities generate broad-based and inclusive economic benefits.

Creating Investment Confidence Through Value Chain Financing

A distinctive feature of CRDB's approach is its focus on value chain financing.

Mr. Maregesi explained that the Bank evaluates investments across entire value chains and actively links producers with off-takers and markets. Through structured agreements involving producers, buyers, and financial institutions, the Bank helps reduce uncertainty while strengthening market access.

This approach ensures that producers have reliable markets for their products while providing financial institutions with greater confidence regarding repayment and business viability.

He noted that financing becomes significantly more sustainable when producers are integrated into functioning value chains rather than operating in isolation.

Investment Outlook

Mr. Maregesi concluded by highlighting Tanzania's favourable investment environment and encouraging both local and international investors to take advantage of opportunities within the Blue Economy.

He noted that ongoing government efforts to strengthen the investment climate, coupled with growing partnerships between financial institutions, development partners, and public sector actors, provide a strong foundation for future growth.

At the same time, he emphasized that realizing the sector's potential will require continued innovation, collaboration, and investment in systems that enable participation across the Blue Economy ecosystem.

Conclusion

Mr. Maregesi concluded that unlocking Blue Economy transformation requires financing systems that are flexible, partnership-driven, and responsive to the realities faced by producers, entrepreneurs, and investors.

Access to Finance:	1. **Is not merely a capital challenge, but a broader systems challenge involving technology, capacity, risk management, market access, and institutional support.**
	2. **By combining financing with guarantees, technical assistance, value chain development, and strategic partnerships, financial institutions can play a critical role in converting Blue Economy potential into tangible economic opportunities and sustainable growth.**

4.4 Closing Reflections from Keynote Presenters

In their closing reflections, the keynote presenters reiterated the immense opportunities presented by the Blue Economy while emphasizing the need for stronger coordination, financing, and institutional support to unlock its full potential.



Ms. Hellen Dalali, Equity Bank Tanzania

Ms. Dalali observed that while Tanzania's agricultural sector currently makes a substantial contribution to national GDP and employment, the Blue Economy remains significantly underdeveloped relative to its potential. She noted that the sector presents considerable opportunities for growth and called for increased investment in financing, education, capacity building, and enterprise support to enable Blue Economy actors to participate more effectively in emerging opportunities.

She emphasized that expanding access to finance must be accompanied by sustained efforts to strengthen skills, entrepreneurship, and institutional support systems capable of fostering long-term sector growth and community impact.

Mr. Ebson Uanguta, Governor, Bank of Namibia

Mr. Uanguta reaffirmed that the Blue Economy presents enormous opportunities for economic transformation but requires substantial and sustained investment to unlock its potential. He highlighted the important role of central banks and financial sector regulators in creating enabling environments that encourage investment while safeguarding financial stability.

Drawing on Namibia's experience, he noted that the Bank of Namibia has introduced guidelines requiring financial institutions to incorporate climate-related risks into their risk management and capital adequacy processes. Such measures, he argued, help strengthen the financial sector's capacity to support investments in sectors that are increasingly affected by climate-related risks, including the Blue Economy.



He further emphasized the importance of coordination across the diverse sectors and institutions involved in Blue Economy development, noting that effective collaboration remains essential for translating opportunities into sustainable outcomes.

5.0 Special Sessions

The workshop also featured two Special Sessions that complemented the thematic plenary discussions. The first explored the role of national development planning in advancing Tanzania's long-term transformation agenda, while the second commemorated REPOA's 30th Anniversary by reflecting on three decades of research, policy engagement and knowledge generation in support of inclusive national development. Together, the sessions underscored the enduring value of evidence-informed policymaking, strategic partnerships and institutional learning in shaping Tanzania's future development trajectory, including the transformation of the Blue Economy.



5.1 Special Session 1: National Planning Commission

Chaired by Dr. Blandina Kilama, Deputy Executive Secretary of the National Planning Commission, the Special Session provided a strategic platform for examining how integrated planning, institutional coordination, and evidence-based policymaking can accelerate Tanzania's Blue Economy transformation. Anchored around the presentation of the Blue Economy Research Agenda within the context of Dira 2050, the session brought together perspectives on private sector engagement, Source-to-Sea management, institutional partnerships, and the One Health approach. Collectively, the presentations demonstrated that sustainable Blue Economy transformation requires coordinated action across sectors, institutions and ecological systems, reinforcing the need for planning frameworks capable of integrating economic development, environmental sustainability and human well-being. The session concluded with reflections and a proposed way forward presented by the Chairperson, Dr. Blandina Kilama.

5.1.1 The Blue Economy Research Agenda in DIRA 2050

Presentation by Dr. Crispin Ryakitimbo, Manager, Private Sector Engagement, National Planning Commission

Opening the session, Dr. Crispin Ryakitimbo presented the Blue Economy Research Agenda within the framework of Dira 2050, examining the role of private sector engagement in advancing Tanzania's Blue Economy transformation. He structured his presentation around four key areas: the strategic importance of the Blue Economy to private sector development; the alignment of Dira 2050 with research, innovation and private sector engagement; priority areas for Blue Economy transformation under the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan; and opportunities for strengthening investment across interconnected Blue Economy sectors.

Dr. Ryakitimbo explained that the Blue Economy has been identified under Dira 2050 as a transformative sector capable of driving long-term economic growth by connecting regions and markets through trade, transport and logistics. He observed that countries able to establish leadership in maritime trade, logistics and related Blue Economy activities would strengthen their future global competitiveness. Achieving this ambition, he noted, would depend on stronger collaboration between the private sector, research institutions and innovation systems.

Turning to the national development vision, Dr. Ryakitimbo highlighted Tanzania's aspiration to become a US$1 trillion economy, supported by a globally competitive private sector that contributes at least 70 percent of total investment. He further noted the country's ambition to attain upper-middle-income status, achieve a per capita income of US$7,000 per annum, and sustain an average annual GDP growth rate of 7.5 percent under Dira 2050.



He emphasized that achieving these ambitious targets requires deliberate efforts to align private sector investment with national development priorities. In this regard, he posed three fundamental questions that should guide future policy and investment decisions: Where should Tanzania invest? How can capital be mobilised through private sector entities? How can public-private partnerships be strengthened? He underscored the critical role of research in generating the evidence needed to answer these questions and support informed policy formulation, investment planning and implementation.

Dr. Ryakitimbo explained that Dira 2050, together with its supporting implementation frameworks and the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan, identifies six priority areas for private sector investment in the Blue Economy. These include ports and logistics infrastructure; tourism and hospitality services; marine transport and shipping; fisheries and aquaculture development; maritime services and support; and coastal economic zones. He observed that coordinated investment across these interconnected sectors offers significant opportunities to unlock economic growth while strengthening linkages between production, trade, infrastructure and regional development.

Concluding his presentation, Dr. Ryakitimbo encouraged participants to shift their perspective from viewing the Blue Economy primarily as a collection of natural resources to recognising it as a productive economic platform capable of driving a competitive, inclusive and resilient economy. He reiterated that achieving this transformation would require stronger partnerships between government, the private sector, researchers and development partners to ensure that investment decisions are informed by robust evidence and aligned with Tanzania's long-term development aspirations.

5.1.2 Integrating River Basins and Coastal Systems in Tanzania: A Source-to-Sea Framework for Sustainable Blue Economy Development

Presenter: Prof. Japhet J. Kashaigili, Sokoine University of Agriculture

Prof. Japhet J. Kashaigili presented the Source-to-Sea (S2S) framework as an integrated approach for managing the continuum from headwaters to the ocean, emphasizing that sustainable Blue

Economy development depends on recognizing the ecological linkages between river basins, coastal ecosystems and marine environments. He noted that Tanzania is endowed with diverse river basins, coastal and marine resources that contribute significantly to livelihoods and economic growth, but warned that increasing population growth, climate change and expanding economic activities are placing growing pressure on these interconnected ecosystems.

Explaining the Source-to-Sea concept, Prof. Kashaigili demonstrated how water, sediments, pollutants, biota, materials and ecosystem services flow continuously from upstream catchments to coastal and marine ecosystems. He observed that alterations to these flows at any point along the continuum can have significant downstream consequences, affecting water quality, coastal productivity, fisheries, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. The Source-to-Sea framework therefore extends management beyond conventional administrative boundaries by recognising ecological connectivity and promoting coordinated action across freshwater, terrestrial, coastal and marine systems.

The presentation highlighted that effective Source-to-Sea management should be holistic, collaborative, participatory, context-dependent, results-oriented and adaptive. Prof. Kashaigili explained that successful implementation requires identifying priority Source-to-Sea flows, engaging primary and supporting stakeholders, strengthening governance arrangements, financing intervention strategies, monitoring environmental and socioeconomic indicators, and continuously adapting management approaches based on emerging evidence and lessons learned.



Turning to Tanzania's Blue Economy opportunities, he identified fisheries and aquaculture, coastal tourism, maritime transport, offshore energy, marine biotechnology, coastal agriculture and ecosystem-based enterprises as sectors capable of generating economic growth, employment, food security, climate resilience and biodiversity conservation when supported by sustainable management practices. However, he cautioned that these opportunities remain vulnerable to upstream pressures including deforestation, land degradation, unsustainable agricultural practices and excessive water abstraction, as well as downstream challenges such as marine litter, pollution, toxic sediments and climate-related risks including droughts, floods, sea-level rise and extreme weather events. These pressures contribute to reduced river flows, declining water quality, coastal erosion and the degradation of fisheries habitats.

Prof. Kashaigili further emphasised the importance of maintaining environmental flows, describing them as the quantity, quality and timing of water required to sustain freshwater and coastal ecosystems together with the livelihoods that depend on them. He explained that maintaining environmental flows is fundamental for preserving ecosystem functions, supporting biodiversity, sustaining fisheries, protecting water quality and strengthening resilience to climate change. Using

the Zigi River Estuary as a case study, he illustrated how untreated municipal wastewater, industrial effluent and agricultural pollution had resulted in nutrient enrichment and declining ecosystem health, demonstrating the practical consequences of inadequate upstream management.

Addressing governance, Prof. Kashaigili observed that fragmented institutional arrangements continue to hinder effective Source-to-Sea management, with responsibilities for water resources, fisheries, forestry, environmental management and marine resources often operating independently. He therefore called for integrated governance frameworks that strengthen coordination between river basin and coastal management institutions while promoting science-policy integration, stakeholder participation, ecosystem-based management, climate adaptation planning and sustainable Blue Economy investments. He recommended mainstreaming the Source-to-Sea approach into national planning, incorporating environmental flow requirements into water allocation decisions, strengthening river basin-coastal coordination, expanding environmental monitoring systems and supporting community-based watershed and coastal conservation initiatives.

In concluding, Prof. Kashaigili reiterated that sustainable Blue Economy development requires coordinated management of rivers, estuaries, coastal ecosystems and marine environments as a single interconnected system, leaving participants with the key message that:

- ***"Healthy rivers sustain healthy coasts, and healthy coasts sustain a thriving Blue Economy."***

5.1.3 Institutional Partnerships and Inclusive Blue Economy Transformation in Tanzania: A Socio-economic Perspective

Presenter: Prof. David G. Mhando, Sokoine University of Agriculture

Prof. David G. Mhando examined institutional partnerships and inclusive Blue Economy transformation from a socioeconomic perspective, describing institutional collaboration as the "lubricant" that brings together the various dimensions of the Blue Economy discussed throughout the workshop. While previous presentations had focused on the strategic importance of the Blue Economy together with its scientific and ecological foundations, he argued that sustainable transformation ultimately depends on the strength of partnerships capable of translating policy ambitions into coordinated action.

Structuring his presentation around three strategic questions, Prof. Mhando first examined how Tanzania could strengthen institutional coordination among government, research institutions and the private sector to transform Blue Economy policy ambitions into integrated and actionable partnerships. He argued that Tanzania must move beyond fragmented sectoral management towards an integrated Blue Economy governance model supported by a high-level inter-institutional coordination platform bringing together government agencies responsible for fisheries, energy, environment and other relevant sectors alongside research institutions and private sector actors.

He further emphasized that research institutions, including the Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI) and universities, should be formally integrated into policy implementation and national innovation systems rather than remaining peripheral providers of knowledge. He also advocated for the establishment of public-private research and investment partnerships in strategic sectors such as offshore infrastructure, the marine bioeconomy and renewable marine energy technologies. Recognising that sustainable implementation ultimately occurs at the local level, Prof.

Mhando stressed that institutional coordination must actively involve local government authorities and coastal communities, noting that meaningful participation requires ensuring communities understand the Blue Economy and their role within it.

Addressing his second question, Prof. Mhando explored mechanisms for strengthening linkages between research, policy and extension systems to support innovation and value-chain upgrading across fisheries, aquaculture and emerging Blue Economy sectors. He proposed the establishment of Blue Economy innovation and extension platforms bringing together researchers, government ministries, producers, processors, financial institutions and investors to facilitate knowledge exchange and coordinated action.

He further argued that research should not remain confined to academic journals and technical reports, but should directly support improved aquaculture technologies, seaweed processing, cold-chain systems, fish quality standards and renewable marine energy applications. To achieve this, he recommended strengthening extension services through digital communication platforms, targeted training programmes and local innovation hubs while expanding sustainable financing mechanisms for Blue Economy research and innovation.



Turning to his third question, Prof. Mhando examined how financing and governance arrangements could enhance domestic value capture while ensuring meaningful participation by coastal communities and small-scale producers. He emphasized that Blue Economy financing should extend beyond large-scale investment projects to support local value addition, particularly through expanded processing industries and targeted support for local enterprises.

He further recommended promoting technology transfer alongside strengthened support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and cooperatives. Financial mechanisms, he argued, should include concessional financing, group economic funds, credit facilities, Blue Bonds and dedicated community investment windows capable of expanding access to finance for local enterprises.

Prof. Mhando stressed that governance arrangements must guarantee the active participation of coastal communities, women, youth and small-scale producers, warning that Blue Economy growth which excludes these groups risks increasing inequality rather than promoting inclusive development. He therefore recommended integrating Beach Management Units (BMUs) and community organisations into planning, implementation and benefit-sharing arrangements to strengthen ownership and long-term sustainability.

In concluding, Prof. Mhando observed that the long-term success of Tanzania's Blue Economy will depend on balancing economic efficiency, institutional accountability, environmental stewardship and social inclusion. Drawing lessons from international experience, he cited Mauritius as an example of integrated governance, Indonesia for its livelihood-centred marine development approach, and

Norway for aligning regulatory frameworks with sustainable resource management, encouraging Tanzania to adapt relevant lessons to its own national context.

5.1.4 Blue Economy in the Context of One Health

Presenter: Prof. Robinson Mdegella, Sokoine University of Agriculture

Prof. Robinson Mdegella presented the One Health approach as an integrated framework for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges facing the Blue Economy. Introducing the concept as "Afya Moja" or "Afya Shirikishi" in Swahili, he described One Health as an approach that seeks to optimise the health of people, animals and the environment through collaboration across disciplines rather than working in isolation. He argued that the increasingly complex or "wicked" challenges confronting the Blue Economy require integrated solutions capable of bringing together diverse sectors, professions and communities.

Explaining the evolution of interdisciplinary collaboration, Prof. Mdegella distinguished between multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches. While multidisciplinary approaches combine different disciplines and interdisciplinary approaches promote interaction between them, he explained that transdisciplinary collaboration creates a higher level of synthesis by enabling stakeholders to work collectively towards solving shared problems. One Health, he noted, provides such a platform by mobilising primary and secondary stakeholders while allowing each profession to contribute its unique expertise. He emphasised that the objective is not for professionals to abandon their respective disciplines, but rather to deepen collaboration, learn from one another and develop a shared understanding of complex problems.

Reflecting on past experiences, Prof. Mdegella observed that working in institutional and disciplinary silos has limited society's ability to address complex public health and environmental challenges. Using the COVID-19 pandemic as an illustration, he contrasted earlier approaches that viewed collaboration as dependent upon every sector performing equally well with the One Health philosophy of building collective capacity. Rather than allowing weaknesses within one sector to undermine the overall response, the One Health approach encourages collaboration that enables institutions to complement one another's strengths and respond more effectively to emerging risks.

Prof. Mdegella further noted that global interest in the relationship between One Health and the Blue Economy has increased substantially since the COVID-19 pandemic. He observed that, prior to 2020, publications linking the two concepts accounted for less than 4 percent of the available literature. However, following the pandemic, this proportion increased to more than 45 percent within a year, reflecting growing recognition of the importance of integrated approaches to managing interconnected environmental, animal and human health risks.

He identified several priority areas where the One Health approach can strengthen Blue Economy development. These include addressing zoonotic spillover and aquatic pathogens, strengthening preparedness against disease transmission associated with maritime transport and vector dispersal, managing health risks linked to coastal tourism and wildlife interactions, and reducing supply chain disruptions that threaten livelihoods, food security and economic resilience. Across these areas, he emphasised that collaboration between medical professionals, veterinarians, fisheries experts, environmental scientists and other disciplines is essential for preventing and managing emerging threats.

Prof. Mdegella explained that many emerging diseases arise through the interaction of three interconnected domains. The first involves climate change and ecological processes, which influence the distribution of disease vectors such as rodents, bats and non-human primates. The second relates to anthropogenic activities, including expanding trade, increased international travel and changing patterns of animal production, which amplify opportunities for disease transmission. The third concerns the movement of pathogens between wildlife, domestic animals and human populations. He argued that the One Health approach enables early intervention at the source of these interactions rather than waiting until outbreaks occur, making prevention both more effective and more economical than responding after widespread transmission.



Illustrating the importance of preparedness, Prof. Mdegella observed that increased global mobility enables pathogens to spread rapidly across borders, often resulting in severe economic disruption, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that Tanzania's geographical location within the equatorial and monsoon belt, together with the Congo Basin, places the country within a region where several major infectious diseases—including Ebola, HIV and COVID-19—have emerged over the past century. He further highlighted the growing challenge of antimicrobial resistance, describing it as an increasingly significant public health threat requiring coordinated action across human, animal and environmental health systems.

Prof. Mdegella demonstrated how the One Health approach can support early detection and prevention through integrated surveillance systems. Drawing on the example of COVID-19, he explained that monitoring wastewater for viral material enables public health authorities to detect disease circulation before patients begin presenting at health facilities, thereby creating opportunities for earlier intervention and preparedness. He encouraged participants to use existing scientific knowledge to strengthen predictive capacity and develop mechanisms capable of identifying and managing emerging health risks before they escalate into public health emergencies.

In concluding, Prof. Mdegella observed that the future of Tanzania's Blue Economy depends not only on managing natural resources sustainably but also on strengthening society's capacity to anticipate and respond to emerging health risks associated with environmental change, economic development and global connectivity. He called for greater investment in soft skills—including coordination, collaboration and communication—which, alongside technical expertise, enable institutions and professionals to work together effectively in addressing complex challenges. Echoing a phrase used throughout his presentation, he encouraged participants to work collectively in confronting "dudu baya"—the complex problems that no single institution or discipline can solve alone.

5.1.5 Resolution and Way Forward

Dr. Blandina Kilama, Deputy Executive Secretary, National Planning Commission

In her closing reflections, Dr. Blandina Kilama synthesised the discussions by observing that, although each presentation approached the Blue Economy from a different perspective, they collectively reinforced the need for integrated planning, systems thinking and coordinated institutional action. She noted that the presentations had demonstrated how Tanzania's aspiration under Dira 2050 to increase private sector investment in the Blue Economy must be supported by integrated management approaches that connect source-to-sea systems, strengthen institutional partnerships and promote collaboration across disciplines.

Reflecting on the progression of the presentations, Dr. Kilama observed that participants had been taken through complementary dimensions of Blue Economy transformation—from investment and private sector engagement, to integrated ecosystem management, institutional coordination and partnerships, and finally the One Health approach, which challenged stakeholders to think and act beyond traditional sectoral silos. She noted that, taken together, these perspectives demonstrated that sustainable Blue Economy transformation requires institutions and professionals to work collectively in addressing interconnected environmental, social and economic challenges.

In concluding the session, Dr. Kilama encouraged participants to "stay where you are, but deepen what you are doing," explaining that transformation does not necessarily require abandoning existing mandates or areas of expertise, but rather strengthening them through interdisciplinary collaboration, deeper engagement and continuous learning. She emphasised that by working together across institutions and disciplines, Tanzania will be better positioned to generate lasting impact and improve livelihoods while advancing the country's long-term Blue Economy aspirations under Dira 2050.

5.2 Special Session 2: Celebrating 30 Years of REPOA

The Special Session commemorating REPOA's 30th Anniversary provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on the institution's contribution to evidence-informed policymaking and national development over the past three decades. The session opened with remarks delivered by Ms. Rehema Tukai, Vice Chairperson of the REPOA Board, on behalf of the Board Chairperson, followed by reflections from Dr. Donald Mmari, Executive Director of REPOA. Participants were subsequently introduced to the publication Policy Innovations for Improved Agricultural Production in Tanzania by Prof. Paschal Mihyo, one of the publication's authors, before witnessing its official launch.



Beyond marking the anniversary, the publication synthesises nearly four decades of policy experience in Tanzania's agricultural sector, examining why it was developed, the key findings emerging from

the research, how the publication is organised, and the strategic recommendations it advances for strengthening agricultural production and productivity. The Special Session therefore celebrated not only REPOA's institutional journey but also its enduring commitment to generating research that informs policy and contributes practical solutions to Tanzania's development challenges.

5.2.1 Remarks by Ms. Rehema Tukai, Vice Chairperson, REPOA Board of Directors

Speaking on behalf of the REPOA Board Chairperson, Ms. Rehema Tukai welcomed participants, development partners and invited guests to the special session commemorating REPOA's 30th Anniversary. She noted that the launch of the publication titled Policy Innovations for Improved Agricultural Production in Tanzania formed an integral part of the anniversary celebrations and expressed confidence that the publication would serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, development practitioners, academic institutions and other stakeholders engaged in Tanzania's development.

Before inviting the Executive Director to deliver his reflections, Ms. Tukai drew connections between the discussions held throughout the workshop and the broader institutional role of research in supporting national development. Referring to observations made earlier by Dr. Blandina Kilama, she noted that the Blue Economy continues to attract an expanding range of actors across fisheries, seaweed farming, aquaculture and other emerging sectors. While new institutions and financing instruments are creating opportunities to unlock the sector's potential, she observed that successful transformation requires more than expanding participation.



She emphasised that, alongside the National Planning Commission's role in coordinating the Blue Economy research agenda, effective governance remains essential for aligning actors, harmonising institutional intentions and sustaining implementation through adequate leadership and resourcing. Echoing remarks shared during the workshop by the Governor of the Bank of Namibia, she concluded that strengthening governance will be critical for translating research, partnerships and policy aspirations into meaningful development outcomes.

5.2.2 Remarks by Dr. Donald Mmari, Executive Director, REPOA

Reflecting on REPOA's institutional journey, Dr. Donald Mmari shared a personal encounter that illustrated the origins of the organisation. He recalled meeting Prof. Jan Pronk, the then 86-year-old former Minister for Development Cooperation of the Government of the Netherlands, who had established the Multi-Year Multidisciplinary Research Programme, an innovative financing mechanism that supported four major research programmes across Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Dr. Mmari explained that, although all four initiatives had originally been established as time-bound programmes, REPOA was the only one that successfully evolved into an independent and sustainable

research institution, while the others remained programme-based. He described this as an enduring legacy of Prof. Pronk's vision and acknowledged the Government of the Netherlands for its continued support to REPOA until 2012, noting that the innovative financing model laid a strong institutional foundation upon which subsequent partnerships were built.

Expressing appreciation to REPOA's longstanding partners, Dr. Mmari recognised the continued support of the Embassies of Ireland and Norway, whose contributions have enabled the institution to sustain its work in evidence-informed policymaking and applied research over the past three decades. He observed that, although REPOA had now operated for 31 years, the institution had chosen to commemorate its 30th Anniversary through the launch of a publication that reflects the organisation's enduring commitment to generating knowledge capable of informing national development.

Introducing the publication, Dr. Mmari explained that it synthesises almost four decades of research and policy experience in Tanzania's agricultural sector, examining agricultural policies implemented between 1983 and 2022. He noted that, despite numerous policy reforms and sustained efforts to strengthen the sector, productivity remains the central challenge constraining agricultural transformation. The publication therefore analyses the underlying causes of this persistent productivity gap while proposing strategic recommendations for improving agricultural production and productivity.



Concluding his remarks, Dr. Mmari observed that launching the publication represented an appropriate way of celebrating REPOA's institutional journey, demonstrating the organisation's continued commitment to producing research that contributes practical solutions to Tanzania's development challenges. He then invited Prof. Paschal Mihyo, one of the publication's contributing authors, to introduce the book before its official launch, noting that the celebration would conclude with a dinner hosted by CRDB Bank PLC in recognition of REPOA's 30-year milestone.

5.2.3 Official Launch of the Publication titled "Policy Innovations for Improved Agricultural Production in Tanzania formed. Prof. Paschal Mihyo

Introducing the publication, Prof. Paschal Mihyo explained that Policy Innovations for Improved Agricultural Production in Tanzania represents a collaborative effort bringing together researchers and practitioners from REPOA, the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, the University of Dodoma, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Bank of Tanzania, the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) and other collaborating institutions. He noted that the publication comprises 14 chapters spanning 464 pages, written by more than ten authors, the majority of whom are affiliated with REPOA, with additional contributions from partner institutions and experts, including a contributor working with the Russian Ministry of Finance.

Prof. Mihyo explained that the publication was developed to assess Tanzania's agricultural policies and their implementation, with particular emphasis on the role of innovation in improving agricultural production and productivity. Drawing together evidence accumulated over nearly four decades, he observed that a consistent finding emerging across the studies is that, while agricultural production has increased over time, productivity has remained persistently low, revealing a structural challenge that continues to constrain the sector's contribution to national development.



He noted that agriculture remains the backbone of Tanzania's economy, supporting the livelihoods of more than 65 percent of the population while contributing approximately 25 to 27 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Despite its strategic importance, however, productivity growth has not kept pace with the country's development aspirations, prompting the publication to examine policy implementation gaps and identify practical reforms capable of unlocking greater sectoral performance.

Prof. Mihyo further explained that the publication organises its findings around four broad themes. The first examines policy implementation, highlighting the need for more consistent and adequate investment in agriculture. While recognising the progress made, the publication concludes that financing remains insufficient to achieve the Maputo Declaration commitment of allocating 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture. It also identifies a disconnect between planning at central and local government levels and calls for stronger alignment between the two. Particular emphasis is placed on expanding investment in irrigation infrastructure, noting that only 2.5 percent of Tanzania's irrigable land is currently under irrigation, despite the country's significant agricultural potential.

The second theme focuses on innovation and knowledge transfer, arguing for a more balanced relationship between state-led innovation and farmer-led innovation. Rather than treating farmers as passive recipients of knowledge, the publication recommends recognising and building upon existing local knowledge while strengthening collaboration between researchers, extension services and farming communities. Prof. Mihyo further observed that persistent underfunding of the National Agricultural Research System (NARS) has limited its ability to fulfil its mandate effectively and recommended increased investment in research institutions to strengthen knowledge generation and technology transfer.

Turning to agro-processing and value addition, Prof. Mihyo explained that the publication advocates moving beyond an economy dominated by primary commodities towards one that creates greater domestic value through processing industries. It recommends increased investment in agro-processing, strengthened quality assurance systems, improved certification capacity and the replication of successful development models, including SAGCOT, in other regions of the country.

The fourth theme addresses financial inclusion and market access. While acknowledging progress in credit sector reforms, the publication concludes that further improvements are required if Tanzania is to achieve its aspiration of becoming an upper-middle-income economy. It therefore recommends strengthening agricultural finance, expanding warehouse receipt systems to reduce post-harvest

losses and accelerating the digitalisation of warehouse management systems to improve efficiency and market access.

Looking beyond Tanzania, Prof. Mihyo encouraged participants to draw lessons from countries that have successfully transformed their agricultural sectors. He observed that technological transformation is rarely achieved through technology transfer alone, arguing instead that countries create their own technological advancement by establishing the institutions, incentives and enabling conditions that allow innovation to flourish. He cited China's experience in lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty as an example of the importance of creating supportive conditions for long-term structural transformation.



Concluding his remarks, Prof. Mihyo expressed the hope that the publication would serve as a practical resource for policymakers, researchers and development practitioners working to strengthen Tanzania's agricultural sector. He thanked the contributing authors, partner universities, the Bank of Tanzania, development partners, REPOA Management and the Communications Department for supporting the preparation and publication of the book, before informing participants that the publication was freely available through the REPOA website.

The session concluded with the official launch of Policy Innovations for Improved Agricultural Production in Tanzania. The publication was unveiled through a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by REPOA leadership and invited guests, marking an important milestone in the institution's 30-year history of advancing research and evidence-informed policymaking in Tanzania.

The launch was followed by a dinner hosted by CRDB Bank PLC.

6.0 Plenary Session 3: Building the Blue Economies of Coastal Communities through Effective Support – Fisheries and Aquaculture

Chaired by Prof. Paschal Mihyo, Senior Research Fellow at REPOA, the third plenary session examined how fisheries, aquaculture and related value chains can contribute to building inclusive and resilient Blue Economies within Tanzania's coastal communities. Through keynote presentations, government perspectives, private sector experiences and academic contributions, the session explored practical approaches to strengthening livelihoods, increasing productivity, promoting value addition and expanding investment across fisheries, aquaculture and seaweed industries. Discussions also highlighted the complementary roles of public institutions, financial systems, researchers, private enterprises and coastal communities in unlocking the sector's economic potential while ensuring sustainability and equitable benefit-sharing. Collectively, the presentations demonstrated that transforming coastal livelihoods requires not only increased production, but also stronger financing mechanisms, improved governance, technological innovation, value-chain development and market access.

6.1 Keynote Presentation 6: The Essence of Supporting the Blue Economies of Coastal Communities in our Countries

Presenter: Prof. Johannes Iitembu, Department of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, Sam Nujoma Campus, University of Namibia

Opening the session, Prof. Johannes Iitembu presented Namibia's experience in advancing the Blue Economy, demonstrating how the sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and marine resources has contributed to economic growth, employment creation and improved livelihoods within coastal communities. Using Namibia as a case study, he emphasized that the Blue Economy extends beyond the development of individual sectors, serving as a vehicle for poverty reduction, equitable development and the sustainable utilization of marine resources.

Providing national context, Prof. Iitembu explained that Namibia's extensive coastline and large Exclusive Economic Zone have enabled the country to develop a diversified Blue Economy built upon both traditional and emerging marine sectors. He noted that established industries, including fisheries and marine mining, continue to provide employment, foreign exchange earnings and governm

ent revenue, while new sectors are being developed to diversify the economy and expand opportunities for coastal communities.

Turning to governance, he highlighted the development of Namibia's Blue Economy Policy and the application of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as a practical tool for coordinating multiple ocean uses. He explained that while sound policy provides strategic direction, effective implementation remains essential. Through Marine Spatial Planning, Namibia has designated specific zones for fisheries, biodiversity conservation, geological resources, defence and other marine activities, thereby reducing sectoral conflicts, improving transparency in marine space allocation and promoting sustainable resource management.

Prof. Iitembu described fisheries as one of Namibia's most important Blue Economy sectors, contributing approximately 4.5 percent of national GDP, generating employment and foreign exchange through an export-oriented fish processing industry. He noted that Namibia commercially exploits 20 marine species, of which eight are subject to formal management and quota systems designed to ensure long-term sustainability. Following independence, the Government assumed responsibility for protecting marine resources through a science-based management approach anchored in the Constitution and operationalised through the Marine Resources Act, 2000 and its supporting regulations. He emphasized that scientific research informs fisheries policy and quota allocation, while coordinated Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) systems enable effective enforcement and sustainable fisheries governance.

The presentation also examined Namibia's aquaculture sector. Although inland aquaculture remains relatively limited due to the country's geographical characteristics, Prof. Iitembu highlighted the successful development of oyster farming, together with the production of abalone, tilapia and catfish. He further noted that Namibia has tested commercial salmon farming and continues to strengthen aquaculture through supportive regulations, environmental impact assessments and designated aquaculture development zones. Under Namibia's National Development Plan, aquaculture is recognised as an important contributor to food security, employment creation and economic diversification.



Drawing the presentation to a close, Prof. Iitembu identified several lessons that could inform Blue Economy development across Africa, including governance informed by science, effective regulatory enforcement, coordinated monitoring systems and regional cooperation. He cited collaboration between Namibia, Angola and South Africa in the joint management of their shared marine ecosystem as an example of how transboundary partnerships can strengthen sustainable resource management.

Chairman's Remarks

Following the presentation, Chairperson Prof. Paschal Mihyo reflected on the value of regional learning, observing that "knowledge is like fire; you can pick fire from the source and light your own fire without extinguishing the fire at the source." He encouraged participants to draw lessons from Namibia's experience and adapt them to Tanzania's own Blue Economy context.

6.2 Keynote Presentation 7: Role of the Central Bank and the Government in Supporting the Blue Economy's Opportunities for Growth: Insights and Best Cases from the Bank of Tanzania

Presenter: Mr. Emmanuel M. Tutuba, Governor, Bank of Tanzania

Governor Emmanuel Tutuba highlighted the central role of financial inclusion in unlocking the economic potential of Tanzania's Blue Economy, emphasizing that sustainable growth within the sector depends not only on the availability of marine resources but also on ensuring that coastal communities have equitable access to financial services. He noted that Tanzania's Blue Economy encompasses a wide range of opportunities supported by the country's 1,424-kilometre Indian Ocean coastline, the Zanzibar Archipelago (Unguja and Pemba), and the East African Great Lakes, including Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika and Nyasa. Together, these resources underpin fisheries, aquaculture, seaweed farming, maritime transport, coastal tourism and the emerging blue carbon economy. He observed that the fisheries sector alone supports the livelihoods of approximately 4.8 million Tanzanians, including artisanal fishers, fish traders, processors, boat builders and net makers.

The Governor explained that expanding financial inclusion has become a key national strategy for supporting Blue Economy transformation. He reported that financial inclusion in Tanzania increased from 65 percent in 2017 to 76 percent in 2023, reaching 83 percent by 2025 according to the mid-term review of the National Financial Inclusion Framework. Despite this progress, he noted that formal banking remains limited, with only 22.2 percent of adults holding formal bank accounts, while 53.5 percent rely primarily on mobile money services. A further 5.6 percent access financial services indirectly through relatives, neighbours or colleagues, and 18.7 percent remain financially excluded. He observed that fishers and other Blue Economy actors continue to rank among the least financially included groups, alongside women, youth, smallholder farmers, micro, small and medium enterprises, and persons with disabilities.



To address these disparities, Mr. Tutuba outlined the National Financial Inclusion Framework (2023–2028), which identifies fishers and other Blue Economy actors as priority beneficiaries. The framework promotes tailored financial products designed to reflect the realities of fishing and coastal livelihoods, including flexible microcredit aligned with seasonal fishing cycles, harvest-linked savings products and weather-indexed insurance. It also supports digital financial literacy programmes and the integration of fishers into the national credit reporting ecosystem to strengthen their creditworthiness and improve access to formal financing.

The presentation further examined the financial inclusion gaps affecting Blue Economy communities. Governor Tutuba observed that fishing communities remain highly vulnerable to weather-related shocks, equipment failure, market price fluctuations and declining fish stocks, yet insurance coverage remains limited. He cited the temporary closure of fishing activities on Lake Tanganyika as an

example of how environmental and regulatory events can significantly disrupt livelihoods. Formal credit penetration also remains low, particularly among mobile fishing communities with limited collateral and no permanent settlements. He further highlighted the prevalence of informal savings mechanisms, such as Village Community Banks (VICOBA) and rotating savings groups, which expose members to fraud, financial loss and limited protection. Additional barriers include inadequate financial identities, lack of national identification documents and persistent gender disparities that disproportionately affect women engaged in fish processing, marketing and seaweed farming.

Responding to these challenges, Governor Tutuba outlined several initiatives being implemented by the Bank of Tanzania. These include strengthening the regulatory environment through the Microfinance Act (2018) and related financial sector reforms, expanding digital financial services through the Tanzania Instant Payment System (TIPS), and providing affordable financing through a TZS 1 trillion Special Credit Facility and statutory minimum reserve incentives that encourage lending to priority sectors, including fisheries, aquaculture and other Blue Economy activities. He further reported that the Credit Guarantee Scheme has facilitated loans exceeding TZS 1.9 trillion, including TZS 34.2 billion in Zanzibar, of which TZS 7.3 billion has supported Blue Economy investments. The Bank is also establishing the Tanzania Credit Guarantee Public Limited Company, which will provide guarantee services, business development support, credit reference services and advisory assistance to underserved sectors.

Looking ahead, the Governor outlined several priority actions to strengthen financial inclusion within the Blue Economy. These include:

- **undertaking diagnostic studies of fishing and maritime communities to better understand sector-specific financial needs;**
- **integrating fishing licence records and cooperative membership into national identification and credit reporting systems;**
- **expanding financial literacy, business formalisation and credit guarantee services;**
- **establishing a centralised registry for movable collateral;**
- **deploying financial service agents at major fish landing sites;**
- **implementing targeted financial inclusion programmes for women fish traders, processors and seaweed farmers; and**
- **developing regulations that support tailored financial products for Blue Economy actors.**

Concluding his presentation, Governor Tutuba emphasized that:

The Blue Economy is Not Merely an Economic Sector:	**1. But a way of life for millions of Tanzanians.**
	2. Financial inclusion provides the foundation upon which equitable Blue Economy transformation can be built, arguing that without inclusive financial systems, the benefits of Blue Economy growth risk bypassing those who depend on the sector most.
	3. Reaffirming the Bank of Tanzania's commitment as regulator, payments infrastructure provider, policy anchor and convener, he called upon all stakeholders to work together in de-risking the sector, noting that unlocking finance is essential to unlocking the full potential of Tanzania's Blue Economy.

Chairperson's Remarks

Following the keynote presentation, the **C**hairperson encouraged participants to reflect on the common themes emerging across presentations delivered by the World Bank, the Bank of Namibia, the Bank of Tanzania, CRDB Bank PLC and Equity Bank Tanzania. He observed that while financing remains essential for Blue Economy transformation, successful investment also depends on the fundability of projects, emphasising that viable initiatives must be capable of attracting finance just as individuals and enterprises must demonstrate creditworthiness to access credit. He further noted that risk management and risk mitigation had emerged as recurring themes across all financial institutions represented during the workshop, underscoring their importance in creating a sustainable and inclusive financing ecosystem for Tanzania's Blue Economy.

6.3 Panel Discussion

Fisheries

6.3.1 Best Cases of Aquaculture in Tanzania Mainland's Blue Economy Implementation

Presenter: Dr. Nazael Amos Madalla, Director of Aquaculture, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries

Dr. Nazael Amos Madalla presented Tanzania Mainland's experience in promoting commercial aquaculture through an innovative soft loan programme designed to address one of the sector's most significant constraints—limited access to finance. He explained that despite Tanzania's abundant aquatic resources, including 346,337 km² of marine and freshwater resources, a 1,424-kilometre coastline, numerous lakes and rivers, and favourable conditions for aquaculture, fish production had remained below the country's growing demand. He noted that



expanding aquaculture has become essential to closing the widening gap between fish demand and supply while improving food security, employment and economic growth.

Reflecting on the Ministry's experience, Dr. Madalla observed that Tanzania possesses abundant water resources and a large labour force comprising unemployed youth, women and men who could participate in aquaculture, yet production remained constrained largely because prospective fish farmers lacked access to affordable financing. In response, the Ministry secured TZS 14.08 billion from the Government's development budget and partnered with the Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB) to establish an interest-free soft loan scheme that eliminated collateral requirements and made commercial cage fish farming accessible to previously excluded groups. Rather than disbursing cash, the programme provides beneficiaries with production inputs, including fish cages, fingerlings and feed, thereby ensuring that financing is invested directly in productive activities.

Beyond financing, Dr. Madalla explained that the Ministry also addressed regulatory barriers affecting cage fish farming. Following surveys conducted in Lake Victoria and parts of Lake Tanganyika, suitable areas for cage fish farming were identified and designated, while an online permitting system was introduced to simplify the licensing process. Applicants can now submit the required documentation electronically and obtain permits without travelling to the Ministry's headquarters in Dodoma, significantly reducing administrative costs and improving access to investment opportunities.

The programme, officially launched by H.E. President Samia Suluhu Hassan on 30 January 2024, has supported more than 2,000 beneficiaries, including individuals, companies, community-based organisations and cooperatives. Dr. Madalla illustrated the programme's impact using the example of "Vijana Nguvu Kazi", a youth group from Mwanza that received financing **for** nine fish cages. During its first production cycle, the group harvested 16.6 tonnes of fish, generated gross revenue of TZS 128.1 million, repaid TZS 69.9 million of its loan and realised net returns exceeding TZS 53.8 million. By the third production cycle, the group had continued to repay its loans successfully while generating sufficient profits to purchase an additional fish cages and expand their operations. He observed that under conventional lending arrangements, the group would not have qualified for commercial financing of nearly TZS 140 million, demonstrating the transformative potential of tailored financial products for youth entrepreneurs.

Dr. Madalla reported that the programme has delivered encouraging results. To date, 536 fish cages have been financed, benefiting 1,993 individuals, including women and youth around Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika. Beneficiaries have collectively harvested 449.75 tonnes of fish valued at over TZS 3.5 billion, while loan repayments have exceeded TZS 2.98 billion, demonstrating a remarkably high repayment rate. He further noted that the initiative has stimulated private sector investment across the aquaculture value chain, including the production of cages, fingerlings and fish feed, while increasing confidence among financial institutions to invest in the sector.



Concluding his presentation, Dr. Madalla emphasized that soft loans can accelerate aquaculture growth, while cage fish farming offers significant economic and social returns for coastal and lakeside communities. Looking ahead, he called for greater strategic investment in post-harvest handling, value addition and supporting infrastructure to prepare for increased production. He further underscored the importance of collaboration, noting that the partnership between the Ministry and TADB demonstrated how coordinated action between public institutions and financial partners can unlock investment, strengthen livelihoods and accelerate Blue Economy transformation.

6.3.2 Best Cases of Fisheries in Zanzibar's Blue Economy Implementation

> *Presenter: Dr. Salim Mohammed Hamza, Officer-in-Charge, Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, Pemba Office*

Dr. Salim Mohammed Hamza presented Zanzibar's experience in implementing Blue Economy interventions within the fisheries sector, highlighting infrastructure development, institutional strengthening and innovative financing as the three pillars underpinning the Government's approach. Referring to the opening remarks delivered by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, he noted that Zanzibar's progress reflects the broader vision of positioning the Blue Economy as a driver of sustainable economic growth and improved livelihoods.

Drawing on the framework presented earlier by the World Bank, Dr. Hamza explained that Zanzibar's fisheries initiatives align closely with three strategic pillars of Blue Economy transformation: infrastructure development, institutional frameworks and financing.

Under infrastructure development, he highlighted the Government's ongoing investment in fisheries landing sites, noting that plans are underway to construct 15 modern landing sites across Unguja and Pemba. These facilities are expected to improve fish handling, strengthen market access and provide conducive infrastructure to support sustainable fisheries development.

Turning to institutional frameworks, Dr. Hamza explained that Zanzibar has adopted a bottom-up governance approach by embedding fisheries management within local communities. He noted that the establishment of Shehia Fisheries Committees (SFCs) has strengthened coordination between fishing communities and the Ministry, creating clear communication channels and governance structures that facilitate implementation of Blue Economy initiatives at the grassroots level. These community-based structures are further supported by policy and operational tools that guide implementation across the fisheries sector.

On financing, Dr. Hamza emphasized the Government's commitment to improving the welfare and economic empowerment of fishers. Referring to the "Inuka na Uchumi wa Bluu" initiative presented earlier by Prof. Neema Mori of CRDB Bank, he noted that 1,027 fishing boats have been provided to fishers to strengthen productivity and expand economic opportunities. He further explained that these investments are closely linked to sustainable fisheries management, with Government encouraging fishers to transition from nearshore, low-tide fishing grounds to deeper offshore waters of at least 12 nautical miles, thereby reducing pressure on coastal ecosystems while improving fishing efficiency and productivity.

Concluding his presentation, Dr. Hamza observed that Zanzibar's experience demonstrates how coordinated investments in infrastructure, community-based governance and targeted financing

can strengthen fisheries development while advancing the broader objectives of the Blue Economy through improved livelihoods, sustainable resource management and inclusive economic growth.

Aquaculture

6.3.3 Benefits and Costs of the Aquaculture Fishing Industry

Presenter: Mr. Goodward Mulubwa, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Big Best Company, Mwanza

Mr. Goodward Mulubwa introduced Big Best Company as an emerging Tanzanian aquaculture enterprise committed to expanding commercial fish farming through modern production systems and value chain integration. Established in 2023, the company is currently operating on a trial production basis and seeks to contribute to Tanzania's Blue Economy by increasing domestic fish production while creating employment and investment opportunities within the aquaculture sector.

The presentation was supported by a promotional video showcasing the company's operations and management team. Introducing the video, Mr. Mulubwa acknowledged members of his team, including Mr. Gilbert Itamo, General Manager, and Prof. Limbu of the University of Dar es Salaam, a member of the company's Board of Directors.

Narrating the company's operations, Mr. Ayubu Gedi Messo, Human Resources Manager, explained that Big Best Company specialises in farming locally available tilapia and other indigenous Tanzanian fish species, deliberately avoiding imported species. He noted that the company manages the entire aquaculture production process, beginning with hatchery and fry production through to the rearing of mature fish for commercial distribution.



Providing further insight into the production system, Mr. Salim Issa, Project Manager, explained that the company currently operates 120 nursery cages and 15 ponds, enabling it to undertake all stages of the aquaculture value chain, from hatchery production to final sales. He noted that fish typically require approximately nine months to reach market size, reflecting the company's emphasis on quality production throughout the production cycle.

Focusing on market access, Ms. Pulkeriah Lasway, Sales and Marketing Manager, outlined the company's sales procedures, explaining that customers are able to purchase fish through multiple payment platforms, including bank deposits at CRDB Bank, through Lipa Namba services provided through CRDB Bank and Vodacom, as well as direct cash payments. She noted that these payment options are intended to improve customer convenience.

Due to time constraints, the video presentation was paused before the segment featuring the company's Transport and Distribution Manager, Mr. Sosthenes, could be shown.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Mulubwa shared the company's long-term vision of becoming Africa's largest fish farming enterprise by 2029, targeting an annual production of more than 100,000 metric tonnes of fish through continued investment and strategic support from CRDB Bank.

Chairperson's Remarks

Responding to the presentation, the Chairperson described the company's experience as both encouraging and insightful. Owing to time limitations, he invited the presenters to provide additional details during the plenary discussion and question-and-answer session. Following the close of the session, the remainder of the promotional video was screened for participants who wished to learn more about the company's operations and future plans.

6.3.4 Best Cases of Aquaculture in Zanzibar's Blue Economy Implementation

> ***Presenter: Mr. Buriyan Mussa Hassan, Acting Director of Fisheries Management and Development, Deep Sea Fishing Authority***

Mr. Buriyan Mussa Hassan presented Zanzibar's experience in advancing aquaculture as a key pillar of the Blue Economy, demonstrating how innovation, community participation and public-private partnerships have contributed to livelihood improvement, environmental conservation and economic diversification. He explained that marine aquaculture in Zanzibar dates back to the 1980s, when experimental seaweed farming was first introduced before gradually expanding into large-scale community-based production and the cultivation of additional high-value marine species.

Beginning with seaweed farming, Mr. Hassan noted that mariculture activities have largely centred on the cultivation of red seaweed varieties, which have become one of Zanzibar's most successful Blue Economy initiatives. He observed that more than 80 percent of seaweed farmers are women, highlighting the sector's important contribution to women's economic empowerment. Supported by improved seaweed strains and processing facilities, the industry now employs more than 15,000 farmers, contributes to household resilience and export trade, and reached production of approximately 20,000 metric tonnes in 2025.

The presentation also highlighted the growing importance of sea cucumber farming, which is undertaken in intertidal pens constructed along Zanzibar's coastline. Mr. Hassan explained that farmers access these pens during low tide before leaving them submerged during high tide, with approximately 100 farms established across the islands through a Government initiative. He noted that sea cucumbers command premium prices in international markets, particularly in East Asia, where products may sell for between USD 100 and USD 200 per kilogram, creating significant income opportunities for coastal communities.



Turning to milkfish farming, Mr. Hassan explained that the initiative originated during the 1990s through research led by the University of Dar es Salaam, representing Zanzibar's first structured effort to develop finfish aquaculture. Supported by international partners, the hatchery project has evolved into a semi-commercial operation that has

strengthened technical capacity and the aquaculture value chain. He noted that it remains a model of how research institutions and public-private partnerships can advance aquaculture development.

Mr. Hassan further showcased several community-led aquaculture initiatives that combine conservation with livelihood creation.

- **In Jambiani Village on Zanzibar's east coast, women-led groups have successfully established sponge farming, producing environmentally friendly bath sponges for international markets where products retail for between USD 5 and USD 30 per piece.**
- **He noted that sponge farming illustrates how sustainable aquaculture can generate income while supporting marine conservation.**
- **He also highlighted community initiatives in Fumba Village, where women produce decorative peels for use in jewellery and handicrafts, providing an additional source of household income while diversifying local livelihoods and strengthening women's economic empowerment. He noted that these products have positioned Zanzibar within niche international markets for handcrafted decorative items.**
- **Another successful initiative highlighted during the presentation was mud crab fattening, undertaken in cages located within mangrove ecosystems and milkfish ponds. Mr. Hassan explained that mud crabs reach market size within 30 to 45 days, providing rapid financial returns while reducing pressure on wild crab populations and creating strong linkages with the tourism and export sectors.**

Mr. Hassan also highlighted the Zanzibar Marine Hatchery Limited, a public-private partnership between Afrovision Tanzania and the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries. He explained that the facility was designed as a multi-species hatchery to support the breeding and seed production of milkfish, sea cucumbers and mud crabs, while providing technical training for local farmers. He reported that approximately 6,000 sea cucumber seeds have already been produced and described the facility as a cornerstone for scaling aquaculture under Zanzibar's Blue Economy framework, ensuring sustainability and resilience.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Hassan observed that Zanzibar's aquaculture best practices demonstrate how livelihoods, conservation and innovation converge under the Blue Economy**. He emphasized that sustaining these initiatives requires resilient ecosystems, stronger partnerships and inclusive participation, arguing that, if these foundations are maintained, aquaculture will continue to serve as a cornerstone for community empowerment and sustainable economic growth.**



6.3.5 Benefits and Costs of Seaweed Farming in Coastal Communities in Zanzibar

Dr. Masoud Rashid, Director General, Zanzibar Seaweed Company (ZaSCO)

Benefits and Costs of Seaweed Farming in Coastal Communities and Zanzibar

Dr. Masoud Rashid presented seaweed farming as one of Zanzibar's most important Blue Economy activities, highlighting its contribution to livelihoods, environmental sustainability and export growth. Introducing the work of the Zanzibar Seaweed Company (ZaSCO), established four years ago, he explained that the company's mandate is to invest across the seaweed value chain and support the sector's long-term development.

Discussing the benefits of seaweed farming, Dr. Rashid observed that the industry generates employment and provides an important source of income for coastal communities, thereby strengthening household livelihoods. He noted that these economic benefits also translate into broader social gains by improving household welfare, including the ability of families to meet basic needs such as food security and education. From an environmental perspective, he described seaweed farming as one of the ocean's most important low-carbon economic activities, emphasizing its environmentally friendly nature and its contribution to sustainable Blue Economy development.

Turning to **the challenges facing the sector**, Dr. Rashid identified unstable seaweed prices as a continuing concern for farmers. He further explained that climate change, particularly rising sea temperatures, has reduced the productivity of shallow-water seaweed farming. Additional constraints include inadequate post-harvest infrastructure, resulting in post-harvest losses exceeding 20 percent, as well as social challenges arising from the demographic composition of the sector, noting that more than 90 percent of seaweed farmers are older women, while youth participation remains limited.

Despite these challenges, Dr. Rashid emphasized that **the sector presents significant opportunities for future growth.** He pointed to:

- the limited investment in value addition as an opportunity to expand processing facilities and manufacture higher-value seaweed products.
- Other priority areas include expanding cultivation into deeper waters, strengthening farmers' technical capacity and producer organizations, improving infrastructure, and developing financing mechanisms capable of supporting sectoral growth.

Concluding his presentation, Dr. Rashid described seaweed farming as one of the most inclusive Blue Economy sectors in Zanzibar and Tanzania, noting that it uniquely combines livelihood improvement, environmental sustainability and export potential. He called for stronger collaboration among stakeholders to ensure that the sector continues to grow and realise its full contribution to the Blue Economy.

6.3.6 Opportunities and Challenges of Seaweed Processing

> *Presenter: Prof. Sebastian Chenyambuga, Director, Centre for Animal Research, Sokoine University of Agriculture*

Prof. Sebastian Chenyambuga examined opportunities for expanding the value of Tanzania's seaweed industry by promoting its use in animal feed as an alternative market. Referring to the preceding

presentation, he observed that low seaweed prices remain one of the principal challenges facing producers, noting that most seaweed cultivated in Tanzania is destined for export markets.

He explained that Tanzanian seaweed faces stiff competition from producers in Southeast Asia, making it difficult to compete in international markets. As a result, exporters often purchase seaweed at relatively low prices in order to remain competitive. Prof. Chenyambuga argued that expanding domestic utilization through value addition would create alternative markets for seaweed and help improve returns for farmers.

To support this proposition, he presented findings from research undertaken at Sokoine University of Agriculture on the use of seaweed as an ingredient in animal feeds for broiler chickens, pigs and Nile tilapia. The studies found that although farmed seaweed contains relatively low levels of protein, it can serve as a probiotic that enhances feed utilization and promotes animal growth.

He further explained that experimental trials involving fermented seaweed demonstrated that inclusion at lower levels, particularly around 2.5 percent, improved growth performance and feed efficiency. However, increasing the proportion to approximately 5 percent produced the opposite effect by suppressing growth, underscoring the importance of determining appropriate inclusion levels.

Based on these findings, Prof. Chenyambuga recommended promoting the incorporation of seaweed into commercially manufactured animal feeds for poultry and livestock as a means of creating additional domestic demand for seaweed. He observed that expanding local markets would strengthen value addition within the seaweed value chain while contributing to improved prices for producers.

He also encouraged further research on additional seaweed species beyond those currently cultivated, including naturally occurring seaweed, to assess their potential protein content and suitability for use in animal feeds.

Concluding his presentation, Prof. Chenyambuga reaffirmed that seaweed can be successfully incorporated into animal feeds at appropriate inclusion levels for both pigs and cattle. He called upon the Ministry responsible for livestock to raise awareness among feed manufacturers and livestock producers to encourage wider adoption of seaweed-based animal feeds.

6.3.7 Plenary Discussion



The plenary discussion provided participants with an opportunity to engage panelists on practical issues relating to financing, value addition, technology transfer, governance and sustainable development within the fisheries, aquaculture and seaweed sectors. Although time constraints meant that not every question received a comprehensive response, the discussion reinforced many of

the themes that had emerged throughout the session while highlighting several implementation priorities.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on access to finance and risk management within the Blue Economy. Participants questioned how financial institutions, particularly the Bank of Tanzania, could reduce investment risks and improve access to affordable financing for productive sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture and agriculture. Responding to these concerns, representatives of the Bank of Tanzania explained that a range of regulatory reforms, financial inclusion initiatives and incentive packages had been introduced to expand access to finance. These included concessional lending facilities, implementation of the National Financial Inclusion Framework, promotion of microfinance services and the establishment of a Credit Guarantee Corporation to support enterprises that may otherwise struggle to access commercial finance. Participants also noted the importance of developing bankable business proposals and welcomed ongoing initiatives by the Bank of Tanzania Academy to strengthen entrepreneurial capacity.

The discussion also examined the competitiveness of Tanzania's seaweed industry and the need to improve returns for producers. Participants observed that farmers currently receive only a small proportion of the final market value of seaweed products and questioned how pricing mechanisms could be improved. In response, panelists explained that Government initiatives were underway to integrate seaweed into warehouse receipt systems, strengthen storage infrastructure and expand value addition through processing facilities. Increased domestic awareness and utilization of seaweed products were also identified as important strategies for stimulating local demand and improving producer prices.

Several participants raised questions regarding technology transfer, research commercialization and value addition. Discussions emphasized the need to move beyond exporting raw products by investing in processing industries capable of producing higher-value products. Reference was made to ongoing investments in processing facilities that will manufacture animal feeds, biostimulants and other seaweed-based products, while additional investments were planned for the production of nutraceutical products and other value-added commodities. Participants further emphasized the importance of commercializing research findings and strengthening collaboration between research institutions, Government and the private sector to accelerate innovation within the Blue Economy.

The discussion further highlighted the importance of capacity building and knowledge transfer. Panelists emphasized that research institutions have an important role to play in providing technical support, training and long-term collaboration with producers, while participants encouraged greater dissemination of research findings to practitioners and business communities. It was also noted that learning should be viewed as a two-way process, with Tanzania continuing to learn from international experiences while sharing its own successes in areas such as seaweed production.

Participants also explored sustainability challenges affecting aquaculture development, including environmental degradation, ecosystem protection, fragmented institutional approaches and financing constraints. Panelists emphasized the importance of integrated planning, protection of aquatic ecosystems and stronger collaboration across sectors to ensure sustainable production systems while reducing production costs.

Reflecting on lessons from Namibia, Prof. Johannes Iitembu reiterated that successful Blue Economy development depends upon strong institutional and legal frameworks, harmonized regulatory systems, science-based fisheries management, investment in value addition and sustained capacity

building. He emphasized that strengthening local technical capacity remains essential for ensuring long-term sectoral transformation.

In concluding the discussion, Chairperson Prof. Paschal Mihyo synthesized the deliberations by emphasizing the importance of adopting integrated approaches to Blue Economy development.

- **He highlighted the need to diversify livelihoods, markets, technologies and the use of marine resources while strengthening savings, expanding access to credit and reinforcing quality assurance systems capable of meeting international standards.**
- **He further encouraged the development of both national and international partnerships as an important mechanism for strengthening investment, improving market access and supporting sustainable Blue Economy transformation.**

7.0 Plenary Session 4: Transforming Trade Expansion through Blue Economy Infrastructure Management – Marine Transport, Maritime Security and Coastal Tourism

The Fourth Plenary Session was chaired by Mr. Aboud Suleiman Jumbe, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Heritage, Zanzibar. The session explored how strategic investments in

Blue Economy infrastructure can strengthen trade competitiveness, maritime security and sustainable coastal tourism. Bringing together regional expertise, national institutions and private sector stakeholders, the session examined the complementary roles of marine transport systems, ports and trade corridors, maritime security, and tourism infrastructure in supporting economic transformation. Discussions highlighted the importance of efficient transport networks, secure maritime domains and well-managed tourism destinations as essential foundations for expanding trade, attracting investment and creating employment opportunities within coastal communities. Collectively, the presentations demonstrated that infrastructure development extends beyond physical assets, requiring coordinated governance, institutional collaboration and integrated planning to maximise the Blue Economy's contribution to national and regional development.

7.1 Keynote Presentation 8: The African Best Cases of the Blue Economy Infrastructure Management and Opportunities for Support to Tanzania

Presenter: Dr. Nomtha Hadi, Director of Research, South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI), South Africa

Dr. Nomtha Hadi presented South Africa's experience in Blue Economy infrastructure management, demonstrating how coordinated planning, institutional collaboration and strategic investment have supported the growth of the country's ocean economy. Drawing on the work of the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI), she highlighted lessons from South Africa's Blue Economy journey while identifying opportunities that could inform Tanzania's infrastructure development and implementation efforts.

Introducing SAIMI, Dr. Hadi explained that the institute was established in 2014 as a coordinating body to support the implementation of Operation Phakisa, a national initiative aimed at unlocking economic opportunities from South Africa's oceans while strengthening maritime security and sustainable development. She noted that SAIMI works across government ministries through research, coordination and capacity building, observing that one of the greatest challenges in advancing the Blue Economy remains effective integration across sectors and institutions.

She explained that South Africa's Blue Economy extends beyond traditional maritime sectors to encompass fisheries, aquaculture, marine transport, offshore oil and gas, marine mining, biotechnology and renewable ocean energy, including wave and tidal energy. The institute also supports research and capacity building on marine pollution, waste management and climate change, recognizing that sustainable infrastructure development must balance economic growth with environmental protection.

Using Algoa Bay on South Africa's coastline as an example, Dr. Hadi illustrated how infrastructure planning has supported the development of multiple Blue Economy sectors, including offshore oil and gas, marine mining, port operations, fisheries and aquaculture. She explained that the region's infrastructure requirements were consolidated into a Blue Economy investment framework, commonly referred to as the Bid Book, which was adopted in 2019 to guide investment, strengthen collaboration among stakeholders and encourage broader private sector participation.



Reflecting on Africa's Blue Economy performance, Dr. Hadi observed that although many African countries have established supportive policy frameworks, significant gaps remain in infrastructure development, implementation and institutional coordination. She noted that while sectors such as aquaculture continue to expand, particularly in South Africa's Western Cape, many countries continue to face challenges relating to transport infrastructure, logistics, coordination and implementation. She emphasized that Marine Spatial Planning serves as an important mechanism for promoting integrated planning, reducing sectoral conflicts and supporting coordinated management of marine resources.

Dr. Hadi further highlighted the contribution of infrastructure to employment creation, industrial development and investment attraction. She pointed to South Africa's commercial ports, boat-building industry and manufacturing and repair facilities as examples of infrastructure capable of supporting economic growth, skills development and foreign direct investment. At the same time, she acknowledged that despite these investments, South Africa continues to face operational challenges, noting that some ports have experienced declining efficiency despite possessing significant infrastructure capacity. She emphasized that infrastructure alone is insufficient if it is not effectively connected, coordinated and managed.

Turning to the challenges facing Blue Economy infrastructure across Africa, Dr. Hadi identified climate change and environmental degradation, including sea-level rise, ocean acidification and habitat loss, as significant threats to coastal infrastructure. She also highlighted marine pollution, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, piracy, cyber security risks and other forms of maritime insecurity as growing concerns requiring coordinated responses.

Concluding her presentation, Dr. Hadi:

- **Emphasized that strengthening skills and institutional capacity remains fundamental to sustainable Blue Economy development.**
- **She called for increased investment in enabling infrastructure, improved resource allocation and greater localization of infrastructure development to support industrial growth, transport and investment.**
- **While presenting South Africa's experiences as useful lessons, she observed that learning is a two-way process, noting that South Africa also has valuable lessons to learn from Tanzania and other African countries.**

Following the presentation, **Chairperson Mr. Aboud Suleiman Jumbe** observed that the **Operation Phakisa model offers valuable lessons for Tanzania, particularly in promoting job creation, local participation and coordinated implementation.** He further informed participants that Cape Town would host a European Union-supported forum on Blue Economy start-ups aimed at unlocking innovation and financing opportunities across Africa.

7.2 Panel Discussion

Marine Transport (Shipping, Ports and Corridors)

7.2.1 The Namibia Best Cases – Ports, Shipping and Corridors Management, and Desired Support for Tanzania

Presenter: Mr. Gilbert Boois, Maritime Transport Expert, Namibia

Mr. Gilbert Boois presented Namibia's experience in developing an integrated maritime transport and logistics system, demonstrating how strategic investment in ports, transport corridors and regional connectivity has positioned the country as an emerging logistics hub for Southern Africa. He explained that, beginning in 2012, Namibia adopted a deliberate strategy of using logistics as a catalyst for unlocking growth across multiple sectors of the economy, with ports, shipping and transport corridors serving as key enablers of regional trade and economic transformation.

Discussing Namibia's best practices in marine transport, Mr. Boois highlighted:



- sustained investment in port infrastructure and modernization at the Port of Walvis Bay. He explained that the country expanded port capacity through land reclamation, creating a new container terminal that was subsequently concessioned to a subsidiary of the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) to improve operational efficiency and increase cargo handling capacity.
- Additional investments included widening and deepening the main navigation channel to accommodate larger vessels, expanding private warehousing facilities, and developing a dedicated oil and gas supply base in Lüderitz in response to Namibia's emerging offshore oil and gas industry.

Mr. Boois further described Namibia's approach to corridor governance, emphasizing the importance of institutional coordination and public-private partnerships in facilitating regional trade. He noted that the Walvis Bay Corridor Group has, for more than two decades, worked to streamline logistics and remove non-tariff barriers along key transport corridors. He also highlighted the establishment of corridor authorities and permanent secretariats through formal agreements among member states to strengthen dialogue, coordinate implementation and improve cross-border trade. To ensure

long-term sustainability, participating countries contribute to the financing of corridor secretariats through agreed funding mechanisms.

Turning to sustainable logistics, Mr. Boois explained that:

- Namibia is positioning its ports as future hubs for green shipping by establishing partnerships with ports in Portugal and other European countries to advance green and digital transport corridors.
- He further noted that Namibia continues to promote knowledge exchange with African partners, **including Tanzania through REPOA,** as part of broader efforts to strengthen regional collaboration in Blue Economy development.

Reflecting on lessons for Tanzania, Mr. Boois emphasized the importance of transforming ports from congested transit points into specialized logistics hubs supported by clear capacity planning and differentiated functions. He suggested that Tanzania could further strengthen its port system by allocating specialized roles to Dar es Salaam, Mtwara and Tanga ports, thereby reducing congestion while improving operational efficiency. He also highlighted opportunities to expand private sector participation in port development, strengthen ship repair facilities and improve supporting logistics infrastructure.

He further observed that improving marine shipping competitiveness requires investment in deeper port infrastructure capable of accommodating larger vessels, reducing dependence on feeder services and increasing Tanzania's attractiveness as a regional maritime gateway. He also encouraged investment in greener shipping technologies and digital systems capable of improving cargo handling efficiency and reducing turnaround times.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Boois proposed several immediate actions that could support Tanzania's Blue Economy ambitions. These included decongesting the Port of Dar es Salaam by redirecting selected cargo to other ports, linking port performance indicators to wider corridor performance, deepening port infrastructure to accommodate larger vessels, and piloting green shipping corridors capable of attracting climate-aligned shipping lines. He emphasized that successful Blue Economy transformation depends not only on infrastructure investment but also on integrated planning, regional cooperation and coordinated execution across transport systems.

7.2.2 The Essence and Opportunities for Building and Effective Maritime Security Environment in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar

Presenter: Brigadier General Seif Athmani Hamisi, Director General, Mzinga Corporation

Brigadier General Seif Athmani Hamisi introduced Mzinga Corporation as a defence industry institution operating under the Ministry of Defence and National Service. He explained that while the Blue Economy presents significant opportunities for economic growth, its success depends upon two complementary pillars: the modernization of maritime infrastructure and the establishment of a secure maritime environment capable of supporting sustainable economic activities.



He observed that investments in port expansion, shipbuilding and maritime value-chain development must be accompanied by effective maritime security systems. Achieving this, he noted, requires close collaboration among government institutions, international organizations and a broad range of stakeholders responsible for maritime governance and enforcement.

Highlighting the importance of maritime security, Brigadier General Hamisi explained that global trade depends heavily on safe and secure maritime transport, noting that more than 250 million shipping containers move across the world's oceans each year. Ensuring that these goods reach their intended destinations safely is therefore essential for supporting both the global economy and national economic development. He further identified the prevention of piracy, illegal fishing and other maritime crimes, the protection of national maritime borders, the safeguarding of human life during maritime operations and the promotion of maritime economic stability as key objectives of maritime security.

The presenter further observed that maritime security is often narrowly understood as the responsibility of armed security personnel. Instead, he explained that it encompasses four interrelated pillars.

First

- **Maritime safety, which focuses on preventing accidents, managing operational risks and ensuring effective emergency response through institutions such as disaster management authorities in both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.**

Second

- **Involves combating maritime crime through coordinated action between law enforcement agencies and regulatory authorities to address piracy, illegal fishing and other unlawful activities.**

Third

- **Concerns securing maritime borders through defence institutions, including the Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF), the Navy Command and the Kikosi Maalum cha Kuzuia Magendo (KMKM) in Zanzibar.**

Fourth

- **Focuses on preserving the maritime environment by addressing pollution, overfishing and other forms of environmental degradation that threaten marine ecosystemsncerns.**

Turning to institutional arrangements, Brigadier General Hamisi outlined the multi-level governance framework supporting maritime security. At the international level, he referred to international maritime organizations and legal frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). At the regional level, he highlighted the Djibouti Code of Conduct as an important framework for regional cooperation, while nationally he identified a range of institutions responsible for maritime regulation, enforcement and environmental management, including the

Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC), the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), defence and security institutions, the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) and the National Joint Operations Centre.

The presenter emphasized that strengthening maritime security extends beyond enforcement alone.

- **He identified community empowerment, stronger intergovernmental coordination and periodic review of legal and policy frameworks as important measures for improving maritime governance.**
- **He further observed that environmental protection should be recognized as an integral component of maritime security, noting that degradation of coastal and marine ecosystems ultimately undermines efforts to protect maritime borders and sustain Blue Economy activities.**
- **In this regard, he suggested that environmental institutions and financial actors should play a more prominent role within existing coordination mechanisms while coastal communities should be empowered to actively support maritime security efforts through greater awareness, participation and stewardship.**

Following the presentation, Chairperson Ms. Hellen Dalali emphasized that effective maritime security depends upon strong coordination and cooperation among institutions at local, national, regional and international levels. She observed that maritime safety underpins trade and economic development while also supporting border protection, disaster preparedness and sustainable resource management. She further highlighted the importance of strengthening cross-sectoral coordination, enhancing the complementary roles of relevant institutions and empowering coastal communities to contribute to maritime vigilance and regional maritime stability.

Maritime Security

7.2.3 The Essence and Opportunities for Building Effective Maritime Security Environment in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar

> ***Presenter: Salma Suleiman Omar, Acting Director, Department of Port and Shipping, Zanzibar Maritime Authority (ZMA)***

Ms. Salma Suleiman Omar presented the role of the Zanzibar Maritime Authority (ZMA) in strengthening maritime security and supporting the sustainable development of Zanzibar's Blue Economy. She explained that ZMA serves as the regulatory authority responsible for coordinating, regulating and monitoring maritime activities within Zanzibar's waters, with a mandate to ensure the safety, security and orderly operation of the maritime sector.

She noted that one of ZMA's core responsibilities is ensuring compliance with the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, which Tanzania has ratified and incorporated into its national regulatory framework. Through the implementation of maritime security guidelines and continuous oversight of ports and vessels, ZMA seeks to ensure that maritime transport operates in accordance with internationally recognized safety and security standards.

Ms. Omar emphasized that, as an island economy, Zanzibar depends heavily on the ocean for trade, transport and economic development. Consequently, safeguarding maritime trade and logistics is not

merely a regulatory obligation but a fundamental requirement for sustaining the country's economic growth and Blue Economy aspirations.

She further highlighted the importance of maritime security in supporting Zanzibar's tourism industry. Beyond its well-known spice heritage, Zanzibar attracts visitors through its beaches, marine recreation and water-based tourism activities, all of which depend upon a safe and secure maritime environment. She also underscored the need to protect marine resources from unsustainable exploitation in order to preserve the natural assets upon which tourism and other Blue Economy sectors depend.

Looking ahead, Ms. Omar noted ongoing investments in port infrastructure, including the development of the Mangapwani Port project, which aims to position Zanzibar as a regional trans-shipment hub capable of attracting major international shipping lines and strengthening the country's role within regional maritime trade.



Following the presentation, Chairperson Mr. Aboud Suleiman Jumbe emphasized the importance of integrating, standardizing and coordinating maritime activities as essential elements for strengthening maritime security and supporting sustainable Blue Economy development.

Coastal Tourism

7.2.4 The Essence and Opportunities for Building an Effective Coastal Tourism Environment in Tanzania Mainland

Presenter: Ms. Lathifa K. Sykes, Executive Secretary, Tanzania Aviation Operators Association (TAOA)

Ms. Lathifa K. Sykes presented coastal tourism as one of the most significant opportunities for expanding Tanzania's Blue Economy, arguing that tourism should be viewed not as a standalone sector but as an important trade corridor capable of generating employment, foreign exchange, investment and community income. She emphasized that Tanzania's 1,424-kilometre coastline and extensive marine and inland water resources provide a strong foundation for developing an integrated coastal tourism economy, while noting that a coastline represents natural potential rather than a tourism destination in itself. She observed that the challenge is to transform scattered tourism assets into structured, investable and well-managed destinations.



She highlighted Tanzania's diverse coastal assets, including beaches, mangroves, coral reefs, marine

parks, cultural heritage sites and inland water attractions, arguing that these resources should be viewed not only as protected areas but also as tourism assets capable of complementing the country's established wildlife tourism products. She noted that connecting these assets into an integrated Blue Economy tourism corridor presents an important opportunity for broadening Tanzania's tourism offering and strengthening coastal livelihoods.

Reflecting on previous national discussions, Ms. Sykes referred to the Blue and Green Forum, noting that the forum had already provided strategic direction for transforming Tanzania's coastal and hinterland ecosystems into productive Blue Economy destinations. She emphasized that the next priority is moving from potential to implementation through evidence-based planning. This, she argued, requires comprehensive inventories of tourism assets, SWOT analyses and mission-oriented problem solving to inform investment decisions and coordinated action. She further observed that insufficient knowledge of existing tourism assets continues to constrain effective planning and development.

Ms. Sykes proposed that the Tourism Policy coordination framework, PAMOJA, should serve as the primary implementation platform through which priorities are agreed, responsibilities assigned, timelines established and progress monitored. She also called for stronger public-private coordination, encouraging the private sector to organize itself more effectively, contribute evidence-based recommendations and actively participate in implementation and monitoring. In addition, she noted that operational challenges affecting tourism.

7.2.5 The Essence and Opportunities for Building an Effective Coastal Tourism Environment in Zanzibar

Presenter: Mrs. Raya Juma Omar, Chief Executive Officer, Zanzibar Association of Tour Operators (ZATO)

Mrs. Raya Juma Omar presented the perspective of the Zanzibar Association of Tour Operators, emphasizing that the long-term success of Zanzibar's tourism industry depends upon protecting the coastal and marine resources on which the sector is built. She explained that ZATO's mandate is to promote and safeguard the tourism industry while supporting sustainable development of Zanzibar's coastal tourism economy.

She observed that tourism remains one of Zanzibar's leading economic sectors and is heavily dependent on the conservation of beaches, marine ecosystems and other coastal resources. At the same time, she cautioned that increasing tourist arrivals place growing pressure on these natural assets, making it essential to balance economic growth with environmental sustainability and community well-being.

Mrs. Omar identified the protection of Zanzibar's coastal and marine ecosystems as a fundamental requirement for sustaining the tourism sector. She emphasized the importance of safeguarding beaches, marine habitats and other natural tourism assets while strengthening coastal management systems capable of supporting long-term environmental resilience.



Reflecting on lessons for sustainable tourism development, she argued that sustainability should be treated as a national priority. This includes strengthening mangrove restoration initiatives, investing in climate change adaptation measures and addressing shoreline erosion through interventions such as mangrove planting and sustainable shoreline protection.

Turning to policy priorities, Mrs. Omar highlighted the need to strengthen regulation of illegal coastal development and improve control of unsustainable sand mining activities. She further advocated for the implementation of sustainable tourism policies that promote renewable energy, recycling, climate adaptation and stronger investment in environmental protection. She also underscored the importance of building the capacity of coastal communities through skills development and training to enable them to participate more effectively in the tourism economy.

Concluding her presentation, Mrs. Omar emphasized that sustainability is not an option but a necessity for the future of Zanzibar's tourism industry, stressing that protecting coastal ecosystems today is essential for securing the long-term competitiveness and resilience of the sector.

Following the presentation, Chairperson Mr. Aboud Suleiman Jumbe highlighted the importance of community empowerment, diversification of tourism products and the application of Marine Spatial Planning in supporting sustainable coastal tourism development. He also noted ongoing efforts to develop the Pemba Tourism Master Plan as an important step towards strengthening tourism planning and management in Zanzibar.

7.3 Plenary Discussion

The plenary discussion focused on strengthening maritime security, developing coastal tourism infrastructure, promoting regional collaboration and ensuring that coastal communities play a central role in Blue Economy development. Participants drew connections between maritime transport, tourism, environmental management and security, emphasizing that these sectors must be planned and implemented in an integrated manner.

A significant portion of the discussion examined the role of technology in strengthening maritime security. Participants observed that advances such as drone technology are increasingly being used to support surveillance and monitoring of coastal and marine environments, and questioned how these technologies could be integrated into existing maritime security systems. Responding to the discussion, panelists explained that maritime security and airspace security are closely linked but fall under different institutional mandates, with the Navy taking the lead in safeguarding maritime spaces while the Air Force is responsible for airspace security. It was noted that emerging technologies such as drones will continue to play an increasingly important role in surveillance and maritime security.



Participants also explored opportunities for expanding coastal tourism by drawing lessons from other countries, including Egypt, and discussed how Tanzania could better utilize its extensive coastal and marine resources to strengthen tourism development. The discussion emphasized that

successful coastal tourism depends upon adequate infrastructure, coordinated planning and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Infrastructure development emerged as another recurring theme. Panelists emphasized the importance of continuously upgrading Blue Economy infrastructure, including ports and berths, while applying nature-based solutions to address coastal erosion, flooding and other climate-related risks. The discussion further highlighted the need for increased investment in cold-chain systems and cold storage facilities to strengthen fisheries value chains and support both offshore and onshore fish processing.

The discussion also reinforced that maritime security is a shared responsibility requiring coordinated action across multiple institutions. Panelists noted that safeguarding Tanzania's maritime domain depends upon collaboration among defence and security institutions, regulatory authorities and other stakeholders, while emphasizing that effective coordination is essential for protecting lives, supporting trade and sustaining Blue Economy activities.



Participants further stressed that coastal communities should remain at the centre of Blue Economy planning and implementation. They emphasized that community voices must be incorporated into governance processes and development planning, cautioning against overly centralized approaches that fail to recognize the knowledge, interests and stewardship role of local communities.

The discussion also drew attention to broader governance challenges, including the licensing of fishing fleets and the relatively low revenue generated from licensing systems. Participants observed that this remains a common challenge across many countries and highlighted the need for continued dialogue on strengthening regulatory frameworks and improving resource governance.

8.0 Plenary Session 5: Blue Economy Partnerships, Research and Renewable Energy

Chaired by Ms. Hellen Dalali, Head of Sustainability at Equity Bank Tanzania, the fifth plenary session explored the partnerships, research systems and technological innovations required to

sustain long-term Blue Economy transformation. Building upon the sectoral opportunities and implementation experiences discussed in earlier sessions, the plenary examined how strategic partnerships, evidence-based research and renewable energy solutions can strengthen innovation, inform policy and support sustainable economic growth. Through contributions from regional organisations, government institutions, research agencies and the private sector, discussions highlighted the importance of collaborative governance, knowledge generation and emerging clean energy technologies in unlocking new opportunities across the Blue Economy. Collectively, the presentations demonstrated that achieving long-term transformation depends not only on effective implementation today, but also on investing in the partnerships, scientific knowledge and innovative technologies that will shape the Blue Economy of the future.



8.1 Keynote Presentation 9: Blue Economy Partnerships Best Cases and the Underlying Research Frameworks

Presenter: Dr. Obakeng Molelu, Science to Policy Programme Manager, Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA)

Dr. Obakeng Molelu presented the role of partnerships, science and research in advancing sustainable Blue Economy development across the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region. Drawing on the experience of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), a regional organization headquartered in Zanzibar and operating across the Western Indian Ocean from Somalia to South Africa, he emphasized that the ocean has always been a connected ecosystem despite political boundaries, making regional collaboration essential for addressing shared opportunities and challenges.

Introducing the concept of successful Blue Economy partnerships, Dr. Molelu identified five characteristics that underpin effective regional collaboration.

First

- Partnerships should be built around shared regional challenges, including overfishing, marine pollution, coral reef degradation and other common environmental pressures.

Second

- They should bridge the gap between science and policy by ensuring that research findings are translated into evidence-based decision-making while supporting the development of the next generation of marine and social scientists.

Third

- Partnerships require multilevel governance that brings together governments, coastal communities, the private sector, research institutions and civil society organizations.

Fourth

- Sustainable partnerships depend upon long-term relationships founded on trust, integrity and high-quality science.

Fifth

- They should prioritize capacity development by strengthening the knowledge and skills of communities, students, technicians and experts across the region.

Dr. Molelu explained that building a competitive Blue Economy depends upon knowledge-enabled governance supported by continuous scientific research. She illustrated this through examples of WIOMSA's work on port sustainability, including research examining climate resilience, green port policies and emerging shipping technologies. She also highlighted studies on nature-based tourism, ecosystem management and community participation, noting that healthy marine ecosystems remain fundamental to sustaining coastal tourism and other Blue Economy sectors. She further emphasized the importance of continuous monitoring, transboundary cooperation, fisheries governance and Marine Spatial Planning as critical components of sustainable ocean management.

Turning to renewable energy, Dr. Molelu described it as an increasingly important component of the Blue Economy with significant potential to strengthen coastal livelihoods while supporting environmental sustainability. She demonstrated how scientific research and innovation can be translated into practical solutions through technologies such as solar-powered freezers that support fisheries value chains and improve food preservation within coastal communities. She emphasized that introducing appropriate technologies requires effective partnerships between scientists, businesses and policymakers to ensure that innovations are both practical and sc alable.

Addressing the issue of scalability, Dr. Molelu observed that renewable energy initiatives require stronger private sector participation and supportive financial mechanisms to enable wider adoption. She identified solar energy as one of the most scalable renewable energy options for the region due to its abundance, while emphasizing the importance of developing Blue entrepreneurship, strengthening policy and investment frameworks, promoting environmental safeguards and investing in workforce capacity development. She further highlighted initiatives supporting women's participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as an important contribution to inclusive Blue Economy development.



Dr. Molelu also emphasized the importance of collective leadership in sustaining regional partnerships, observing that every stakeholder has a role to play in advancing the Blue Economy. She called for greater collaboration among governments, research institutions, communities, financial institutions and the private sector to simplify implementation and improve outcomes for coastal communities. She further underscored the importance of transboundary cooperation, noting that shared marine ecosystems between countries such as Tanzania and Kenya, and Tanzania and Mozambique, require coordinated approaches to Marine Spatial Planning and resource management. She concluded by emphasizing that inclusive partnerships involving women, youth and persons with disabilities remain essential for ensuring that Blue Economy development responds effectively to the challenges posed by climate change.

Following the presentation, Chairperson Ms. Hellen Dalali reflected on the interconnected nature of the ocean, emphasizing that shared marine ecosystems require shared solutions. She highlighted regional connectivity, Blue entrepreneurship and emerging opportunities presented by artificial intelligence as important considerations for strengthening partnerships and supporting future Blue Economy transformation.

8.2 Panel Discussion

Blue Economy Partnerships

8.2.1 Blue Economy Partnership Best Cases and the Underlying Opportunities and Constraints for Tanzania

Presenter: Zahor Kassim El Kharousy, Deputy Principal Secretary, Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries

Mr. Zahor Kassim El Kharousy presented partnerships as a strategic foundation for advancing Tanzania's Blue Economy, emphasizing that the ocean naturally connects countries, communities and economies through shared marine resources. He observed that numerous regional and international cooperation frameworks already exist to support collaboration in areas such as fisheries management, trade and broader Blue Economy development.

He highlighted several international and regional platforms that provide opportunities for strengthening Tanzania's Blue Economy agenda, including the African Union's Blue Economy Strategy and the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement governing the sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. He noted that these frameworks provide important opportunities for countries to learn from one another, share experiences and leverage partnerships to accelerate Blue Economy transformation.

Turning to Tanzania's national context, Mr. El Kharousy explained that the country's Economic Diplomacy Foreign Policy provides a strong foundation for establishing bilateral partnerships with countries such as Namibia, South Africa and Seychelles, enabling mutual learning and exchange of best practices. He further observed that Tanzania has developed an enabling policy and institutional environment for the Blue Economy, including the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, demonstrating the country's commitment to advancing the sector.

He noted that these policy and institutional frameworks have attracted a growing number of development partners supporting Blue Economy initiatives. He cited examples of ongoing partnerships with the World Bank, the European Union and other development programmes supporting fisheries value chains and broader Blue Economy interventions. He emphasized that effective partnerships should extend beyond governments to include non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, vulnerable groups and other development actors in support of national priorities.



Mr. El Kharousy further emphasized that the private sector is a critical driver of Blue Economy growth and should therefore be engaged from the earliest stages of policy development through to implementation. He explained that existing multi-stakeholder committees and coordination platforms provide important mechanisms for sustaining dialogue, strengthening relationships and jointly addressing implementation challenges. He also noted that Zanzibar is in the process of developing targeted investment incentives to further strengthen partnerships and attract investment into the Blue Economy.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. El Kharousy cautioned that while growing international interest presents significant opportunities for the Blue Economy, managing multiple partnerships also presents coordination challenges. He stressed the importance of establishing robust coordination mechanisms capable of preventing duplication, minimizing overlapping interventions and ensuring that partnerships remain aligned with national development priorities.

Following the presentation, Chairperson Ms. Hellen Dalali underscored the important role of bilateral cooperation and economic diplomacy in strengthening partnerships and advancing Tanzania's Blue Economy agenda.

8.2.2 Pursuit for Enhancing Blue Economy Research Frameworks in Favour of the Blue Economy Transformation and Growth in Tanzania

Presenter: Dr. Ismael Aaron Kimirei, Director General, Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI)

Dr. Ismael Aaron Kimirei presented research as the foundation upon which sustainable Blue Economy transformation must be built, arguing that effective planning, investment and resource management depend upon a strong scientific evidence base. Framing his presentation around the Blue Economy research lifecycle, he emphasized that "we cannot measure what we do not measure," observing that research provides the knowledge required to guide informed decision-making and sustainable development.



Reflecting on Tanzania's Blue Economy journey, Dr. Kimirei noted that much of the country's effort has focused on exploration, planning, infrastructure development and investment. However, he observed that Tanzania still possesses limited knowledge of its marine resources because investment in research has historically been inadequate. He explained that achieving the country's aspiration of building a trillion-dollar Blue Economy by 2050 requires a much deeper understanding of marine ecosystems and the challenges affecting their sustainable utilization, including environmental degradation, habitat loss and other emerging threats.

Dr. Kimirei emphasized that while partnerships remain important, research must occupy a central position within Tanzania's Blue Economy agenda. He welcomed the Government's commitment to increasing investment in research as part of the country's long-term development aspirations, while stressing that scientific knowledge must be continuously generated to support innovation, sustainable growth and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Turning to existing challenges, Dr. Kimirei highlighted the persistent disconnect between research, policy and implementation. He observed that although significant scientific knowledge has been generated, stronger coordination is needed among sector ministries and institutions responsible for fisheries, livestock, water, transport and environmental management to ensure that research findings are effectively translated into policy and action.

He further identified limited human resource capacity, inadequate funding and insufficient research infrastructure as major constraints to Blue Economy research. In particular, he emphasized the need for Tanzania to establish a national research vessel capable of serving multiple research institutions and government agencies. Drawing on international experience, he cited Australia's practice of deploying a shared research vessel used by different ministries to undertake marine research and generate scientific evidence for national planning. He argued that a similar approach would enable Tanzania to better understand its marine resources, particularly as new investments such as the fishing harbour at Kilwa Masoko stimulate increased economic activity within the sector.

Concluding his presentation, Dr. Kimirei emphasized that strengthening research capacity is essential for moving from resource exploration to sustainable growth, innovation and long-term stewardship of Tanzania's Blue Economy.

Following the presentation, Chairperson Ms. Hellen Dalali underscored the central role of research throughout the Blue Economy development lifecycle. She observed that addressing research, funding and institutional connectivity gaps should begin with strengthening collaboration among national institutions before seeking partnerships beyond the country's borders.

8.2.3 Pursuit of Enhancing Blue Economy Research Frameworks in Favour of the Blue Economy Transformation and Growth in Tanzania

Presenter: Dr. Nicholaus Tutuba, Manager, Research and Development, National Planning Commission (NPC)

Dr. Nicholaus Tutuba called for a more integrated approach to Blue Economy research, emphasizing that Tanzania's abundant natural resources provide a strong foundation for economic transformation if supported by coordinated research, strategic planning and cross-sectoral collaboration. He observed that the country possesses extensive freshwater resources, including Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika and Nyasa, numerous rivers, significant fisheries resources and substantial oil and gas reserves, all of which present considerable opportunities for Blue Economy development.

He further highlighted Tanzania's strategic geographical position, noting that the country's transport and logistics networks provide an important competitive advantage for regional trade and connectivity. He observed that Tanzania is uniquely positioned to serve as a gateway linking several neighbouring countries, making integrated logistics an important pillar of the country's Blue Economy aspirations.



Emphasizing the cross-cutting nature of the Blue Economy, Dr. Tutuba noted that its successful development requires coordinated action across multiple sectors and ministries while contributing to broader national priorities such as human capital development, nutrition, energy, transport and economic growth. He argued that realizing these opportunities depends upon strengthening research systems capable of generating the evidence needed to inform policy and investment decisions.

Dr. Tutuba further informed participants that the National Planning Commission is developing Tanzania's first National Research Agenda, which will guide research priorities under the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan. He emphasized that the initiative seeks to move research beyond theory towards practical application by ensuring that scientific knowledge directly informs national development planning and implementation.

To achieve this, he outlined a tripartite collaboration framework bringing together Government, the private sector, and higher learning and research institutions. Under this model, the National Planning Commission will coordinate government ministries through their respective research and

policy units to ensure that national priorities remain aligned while encouraging the private sector and research institutions to jointly generate innovative solutions capable of unlocking the country's Blue Economy potential.

Concluding his presentation, Dr. Tutuba called for stronger convergence among all stakeholders, emphasizing that sustained collaboration, coordinated research and shared commitment will be essential for transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy ambitions into tangible development outcomes.

Renewable Energy's Contribution to Blue Economy Transformative Intent

8.2.4 Pursuit for Renewable Energy Sustainable Development including exploration of Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC), Offshore Wind and Ocean Energy Solutions, and Floating Solar Projects to Support Energy Transition

Presenter: Eng. Kato Kabaka, Director of Advisory and Consultancy Services, Energy CARDS

Eng. Kato Kabaka presented renewable energy as a strategic enabler of Blue Economy transformation, arguing that sustainable energy systems must underpin the growth of ocean-based industries. He emphasized that renewable energy is not merely an alternative source of power but a strategic direction for supporting a resilient and sustainable Blue Economy, noting that virtually every Blue Economy sector—including ports, fisheries, aquaculture, processing industries, maritime transport, tourism and coastal communities—depends upon reliable energy.

He explained that the Blue Economy is inherently multi-sectoral, diverse and interconnected, requiring integrated energy solutions capable of supporting economic growth, improving livelihoods and protecting marine ecosystems. He further noted that expanding renewable energy within the Blue Economy contributes directly to environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions while advancing Sustainable Development Goal 7 on affordable and clean energy.

Presenting the range of offshore renewable energy technologies available, Eng. Kabaka discussed offshore wind energy, floating solar photovoltaic systems, Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC), ocean energy technologies utilizing tides, waves and currents, geothermal energy and the strategic importance of critical minerals required for renewable energy systems. He observed that Tanzania's oceans and large inland water bodies possess considerable potential for offshore wind development, while the country's tropical waters provide favourable temperature gradients for OTEC technologies. He also highlighted opportunities associated with geothermal resources linked to the East African Rift System and the growing importance of critical minerals for supporting global renewable energy technologies.



Eng. Kabaka emphasized that each technology presents both opportunities and implementation challenges, requiring appropriate sequencing, research and investment. He recommended immediate pursuit of offshore wind development through public-private partnerships, pilot projects for floating solar systems in suitable coastal locations, continued research and demonstration projects for ocean energy

technologies and OTEC, strategic exploration of critical minerals with appropriate environmental safeguards, and selective development of geothermal energy resources.

Turning to partnerships, Eng. Kabaka stressed that successful deployment of offshore renewable energy depends upon strong institutions and coordinated collaboration among Government, the private sector, financial institutions, research organizations and coastal communities. He underscored the importance of developing an enabling financial architecture capable of reducing investment risks, financing research and pilot projects, and generating the high-quality data required to inform policy and investment decisions. He further highlighted the contribution of regional and international partnerships, including collaboration through the African Union, African Development Bank, East African Community, World Bank, Green Climate Fund and other international development and research institutions in supporting financing, technology transfer and capacity development.

Concluding his presentation, Eng. Kabaka called for the integration of renewable energy into Tanzania's Blue Economy agenda through prioritization of appropriate technologies, mobilization of financial resources, establishment of enabling policy frameworks, strengthening of technical skills and continued investment in research, data generation and strategic partnerships.

Following the presentation, Chairperson Ms. Hellen Dalali reiterated that the Blue Economy is inherently multi-sectoral and energy-intensive, emphasizing that renewable energy technologies present important opportunities for supporting sustainable growth across the sector.

8.3 Plenary Discussion

The plenary discussion focused on financing, research capacity, governance and institutional collaboration as critical enablers of Blue Economy transformation. Participants reflected on how partnerships, research investment and national capacity development can be strengthened to support impleme ntation of Tanzania's long-term Blue Economy aspirations.

A key area of discussion concerned the financing of Blue Economy initiatives. Participants questioned what financing approaches would be most appropriate for supporting research, innovation and sectoral development, including the respective roles of commercial finance, public-private partnerships and development partners. Responding to the discussion, panelists advocated for a hybrid financing approach in which governments, development partners, financial institutions and the private sector each contribute according to their comparative strengths. Particular emphasis was placed on increasing private sector investment in scientific research while avoiding overdependence on a single source of funding.



Research capacity also featured prominently during the discussion. Participants observed that inadequate financing remains one of the principal constraints to advancing Blue Economy research and innovation. While acknowledging that multiple factors influence implementation, panelists noted that governance, institutional capacity and resource availability all play important roles in determining the country's ability to realize its Blue Economy ambitions. It was further noted that the forthcoming

Fourth Five-Year Development Plan includes measures aimed at strengthening national capacity, including plans to build the skills of thousands of practitioners engaged in Blue Economy-related sectors.

The discussion further explored Tanzania's capacity to generate and manage scientific data needed for evidence-based decision-making. Responding to questions on fisheries stock assessments and the need for a national research vessel, panelists emphasized the importance of strengthening domestic capacity for data collection, management and analysis. They observed that relying on external institutions to undertake scientific analyses may limit national ownership of research outcomes, underscoring the need to invest in local expertise, research institutions, equipment and dedicated research infrastructure.

Participants also highlighted the importance of regional cooperation in addressing capacity constraints. It was noted that membership in regional organizations enables countries to share the costs of specialized research activities, including fisheries stock assessments, while benefiting from shared technical expertise, equipment and scientific facilities. Strengthening such partnerships was identified as an important strategy for supporting research, evidence generation and sustainable Blue Economy management.

Overall, the discussion reinforced that achieving Tanzania's Blue Economy aspirations will require sustained investment in research, diversified financing mechanisms, stronger institutional capacity and continued collaboration among national, regional and international partners.

9.0 Closing Session

The workshop concluded with remarks from REPOA's development partners, collaborating institutions and organizers, who reflected on the key messages emerging from the two-day event while reaffirming their commitment to advancing Tanzania's Blue Economy agenda through continued collaboration, research and evidence-informed policymaking.

9.1 Remarks from REPOA's Core Partner

Mr. Francis Sampa, Programme Manager – Inclusive Economy, Embassy of Ireland

Mr. Francis Sampa thanked REPOA for convening what he described as an informative and engaging workshop, noting that the discussions had provided valuable opportunities for learning and exchange among participants from different sectors and countries. He observed that the Blue Economy represents an important development priority for both Ireland and Tanzania, with significant implications for ecosystems, livelihoods and economic development.

Reflecting on the deliberations, Mr. Sampa noted that while Tanzania possesses considerable Blue Economy potential, the next challenge lies in translating that potential into tangible transformation. He observed that throughout the workshop participants had consistently highlighted the importance of financing, scientific research, data, collaboration, coordination and partnerships as critical enablers of sustainable Blue Economy development.



Reaffirming Ireland's continued partnership with Tanzania, he informed participants that the Embassy was in the process of developing its new country strategy and that several areas discussed during the workshop would be considered for future collaboration and support. He further thanked the organizers, sponsors, speakers and participants for their contributions, emphasizing the importance of documenting the workshop's reflections and recommendations and translating them into practical policy and implementation actions. He concluded by observing that what distinguished the workshop was its strong research orientation and its deliberate focus on ensuring that research informs policy and practice.

9.2 Remarks from the National Planning Commission

Dr. Nicholaus Tutuba, Manager, Research and Development

Speaking on behalf of the National Planning Commission, Dr. Nicholaus Tutuba thanked participants for their active engagement throughout the workshop and expressed appreciation to REPOA,

the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, CRDB Bank and the development partners for their collaboration in organizing the event.

He acknowledged the continued support of the Chairperson of the National Planning Commission, H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, noting her emphasis on ensuring that national development planning is informed by sound research and strong collaboration with national and international institutions. He further observed that the Blue Economy has been identified as one of the country's nine transformative sectors and will continue to receive priority attention under the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan. Referring to strategic investments such as the Bagamoyo Port project and other maritime initiatives, he emphasized the importance of ensuring that all Blue Economy interventions are practical, coordinated and effectively implemented. He concluded by thanking participants for their valuable contributions and expressing confidence that the workshop's deliberations would contribute to achieving Tanzania's long-term development aspirations.

9.3 Remarks from CRDB Bank PLC

Mr. Maregesi A. Shaabani, Head of Agribusiness

Mr. Maregesi Shaabani thanked participants for their time, thoughtful contributions and active participation, noting that the quality of engagement throughout the workshop had produced a rich and action-oriented dialogue. Reflecting on the discussions, he observed that participants had explored the immense potential of Tanzania's oceans, lakes and coastal resources as drivers of inclusive economic growth, innovation and climate resilience, while recognizing the critical role of financing in unlocking these opportunities.

He emphasized that the Blue Economy is not an abstract concept but one that directly affects the livelihoods of fishing communities, entrepreneurs and coastal populations across Tanzania. He identified three priorities emerging from the workshop: the importance of evidence-based policymaking founded on high-quality research; strong partnerships among government, the private sector and development partners; and inclusive implementation that ensures coastal and lakeside communities are active participants in, and beneficiaries of, Blue Economy transformation.

Mr. Shaabani further expressed appreciation to the keynote speakers, panelists, participants and organizing partners for laying a strong foundation for continued collaboration. On behalf of the CRDB Bank Board and Management, he encouraged participants to carry the lessons learned during the workshop back to their respective institutions and translate them into policies, strategies and practical actions.

9.4 Reflections and Closing Remarks from REPOA

Dr. Donald Mmari, Executive Director

Reflecting on the workshop proceedings, Dr. Donald Mmari thanked the participants and acknowledged the continued presence of representatives from Ireland and Namibia throughout the two-day event. He observed that the workshop had examined several critical policy issues while reaffirming the central role of research in promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

Reviewing the discussions, Dr. Mmari noted that the Opening Plenary demonstrated strong commitment from Government, development partners and financial institutions to advancing Blue Economy governance and inclusion. He further observed that subsequent sessions had explored the opportunities and challenges of Blue Economy transformation, financing mechanisms, fisheries and aquaculture development, trade expansion through marine transport and maritime security, coastal tourism, partnerships, research and renewable energy.



Looking ahead, Dr. Mmari informed participants that REPOA would prepare a comprehensive workshop report together with thematic policy briefs that would be shared with relevant government institutions and other stakeholders to support evidence-informed policymaking and implementation.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Mmari expressed appreciation to all participants, development partners, keynote speakers, panelists and collaborating institutions for their commitment and active participation throughout the workshop. He specifically acknowledged REPOA's core collaborators—the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, Zanzibar; the National Planning Commission; CRDB Bank; and Mzinga Corporation—for their partnership in delivering the event. He also thanked the workshop host, service providers, members of the media and the Organizing Committee for their contributions to the successful implementation of the workshop before inviting the Deputy Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries to deliver the official closing remarks.

9.5 Official Closing Address from the Host of the Workshop

Mr. Zahor Kassim El Kharousy, Deputy Principal Secretary, Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries

Delivering the official closing address, Mr. Zahor Kassim El Kharousy expressed sincere appreciation to all participants for their active engagement and valuable contributions throughout the two-day workshop. He acknowledged REPOA, the National Planning Commission, CRDB Bank and the workshop's organizing partners, together with government institutions, research organizations, development partners, private sector representatives and civil society organizations, for contributing their knowledge, experiences and evidence-based recommendations.

He observed that one of the workshop's strongest messages was that transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy requires sustained collaboration among government, researchers, coastal communities, development partners and the private sector. He emphasized that the sustainable utilization of marine and coastal resources must continue to be guided by environmental stewardship, social inclusion and economic prosperity.

Mr. El Kharousy further noted that the workshop had demonstrated the importance of integrated planning, strong institutions, continued investment in science and knowledge, and effective partnerships in advancing sustainable Blue Economy development. He stressed that the meaningful participation of coastal communities remains essential for ensuring the equitable sharing of benefits and the long-term sustainability of marine resources.

Concluding his remarks, Mr. El Kharousy encouraged all stakeholders to maintain the momentum generated during the workshop by strengthening partnerships and working collectively to translate the workshop's recommendations into concrete policies, investments, programmes, and actions. He expressed confidence that continued collaboration and shared commitment would enable Tanzania to realize the full potential of its blue economy as a driver of inclusive and sustainable national development.

He thanked the Organizing Committee, facilitators, presenters, rapporteurs and all participants for their dedication and commitment to the success of the workshop. He then officially declared the **REPOA Annual Research Workshop on "Transforming Tanzania's Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development"** closed.

10.0 Key Reflections

While the workshop covered a wide range of Blue Economy sectors and themes, several cross-cutting insights consistently emerged across the discussions. Rather than representing individual presentations, these reflections capture the collective perspectives of policymakers, researchers, development partners, financial institutions, private sector actors and practitioners regarding the conditions necessary for advancing Tanzania's Blue Economy transformation.

1. *The Blue Economy requires systems thinking rather than sectoral thinking.*

- One of the strongest messages emerging from the workshop was that the Blue Economy should not be viewed as a collection of independent sectors but as an interconnected system in which fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, maritime transport, ports, renewable energy, finance, research, environmental management and coastal communities are mutually dependent.
- Participants consistently emphasized that sustainable transformation requires integrated planning that recognizes these interrelationships and enables coordinated action across sectors and institutions.

2. *Integrated governance and institutional coordination are essential for implementation.*

- Across multiple sessions, participants highlighted governance as a critical enable. of successful Blue Economy transformation.
- Discussions underscored the importance of strengthening institutional coordination, aligning policies across sectors, promoting Marine Spatial Planning, enhancing intergovernmental collaboration and establishing effective coordination mechanisms capable of reducing duplication while supporting coherent implementation.
- The workshop also emphasized the value of regional cooperation and economic diplomacy in strengthening partnerships and promoting shared management of transboundary marine resources.

3. *Science, research and innovation must underpin Blue Economy transformation.*

- The workshop consistently reaffirmed that evidence-based decision-making is fundamental to sustainable Blue Economy development.
- Participants emphasized the need to strengthen research capacity, improve data generation and monitoring systems, invest in scientific infrastructure and ensure that research findings are translated into policy and practice.
- Innovation, technological development and stronger collaboration between research institutions, policymakers and the private sector were identified as essential for improving productivity, sustainability and long-term competitiveness.

4. Inclusive financing and value addition are central to unlocking Blue Economy growth.

- Discussions throughout the workshop demonstrated that financing extends beyond increasing access to capital.
- Participants emphasized the importance of developing financial products that respond to the unique characteristics of Blue Economy sectors while strengthening financial inclusion, reducing investment risks and improving the bankability of enterprises.
- At the same time, value addition emerged as a recurring priority across fisheries, aquaculture, seaweed and other marine-based industries, with participants highlighting processing, product diversification and market development as critical pathways for increasing incomes, expanding exports and retaining greater economic value within Tanzania.

5. Infrastructure, connectivity and maritime security enable Blue Economy competitiveness.

- The workshop highlighted the strategic role of ports, transport corridors, logistics systems, digital infrastructure and maritime security in supporting Blue Economy development.
- Participants observed that investments in modern infrastructure, efficient logistics, integrated transport networks and secure maritime spaces are essential for facilitating trade, attracting investment and strengthening Tanzania's position within regional and international markets.
- Discussions further emphasized that infrastructure development should be accompanied by coordinated planning, environmental safeguards and long-term maintenance.

6. Communities and human capital are the drivers of sustainable transformation.

- Across the discussions, participants repeatedly emphasized that the success of the Blue Economy ultimately depends on people.
- Coastal communities were consistently recognized not simply as beneficiaries but as active partners in planning, implementation and stewardship of marine resources.
- At the same time, strengthening human capital through education, technical training, entrepreneurship, innovation and institutional capacity development was identified as essential for supporting long-term transformation.
- Particular attention was given to ensuring the meaningful participation of women, youth and other underrepresented groups in emerging Blue Economy opportunities.

7. Climate resilience and environmental stewardship are foundational to long-term sustainability.

- The workshop consistently reinforced that environmental sustainability is not separate from economic development but forms the foundation upon which the Blue Economy depends.
- Participants highlighted the importance of protecting marine and coastal ecosystems, strengthening climate resilience, promoting nature-based solutions, investing in renewable energy and improving environmental governance to safeguard natural resources for future generations.
- The discussions demonstrated that sustainable Blue Economy transformation requires balancing economic growth with environmental protection and social inclusion.

10.1 Emerging Investor-Ready Opportunities

Alongside the strategic reflections emerging from the workshop, participants also identified several investor-ready opportunities capable of accelerating Tanzania's Blue Economy transformation. Collectively, these opportunities demonstrate where strategic public and private investment could strengthen value chains, stimulate innovation, create employment and improve livelihoods. They also illustrate areas where Tanzania possesses comparative advantages, growing market potential and increasing investor interest.

Investor-ready Opportunity 1: Fisheries & Aquaculture Modernization	1. The fisheries and aquaculture sector emerged as one of the most promising areas for investment. 2. Participants highlighted opportunities to expand sustainable fish production through cage farming, hatcheries, feed production, cold-chain infrastructure, fish processing facilities and improved post-harvest handling systems. 3. Strategic investments in modern production technologies, financing mechanisms and value-chain development have the potential to increase productivity while strengthening food security and export competitiveness.

Investor-ready Opportunity 2: Seaweed Value Addition & Marine Bioeconomy	1. Seaweed was consistently identified as a high-potential Blue Economy subsector with opportunities extending well beyond primary production. 2. Investment opportunities include processing facilities, improved drying and storage infrastructure, deep-water farming technologies and the manufacture of higher-value products such as animal feeds, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, biostimulants and nutritional supplements.

Investor-ready Opportunity 3: Coastal & Marine Tourism Development	1. The workshop underscored the significant potential of coastal tourism as a driver of economic growth, employment creation and community development. 2. Investment opportunities were identified in accommodation facilities, marine recreation services, ecotourism enterprises, cultural tourism products, transport infrastructure, destination marketing and integrated coastal tourism development.

Investor-ready Opportunity 4: Ports, Logistics & Trade Infrastructure	1. Several presentations emphasized the strategic importance of ports, maritime transport systems and logistics corridors in supporting Blue Economy growth. 2. Investment opportunities exist in port modernization, cargo handling facilities, cold-chain systems, maritime logistics services, transport corridors and supporting infrastructure capable of strengthening regional trade and economic competitiveness.
Investor-ready Opportunity 5: Renewable Energy & Green Maritime Solutions	1. Emerging opportunities were identified in offshore wind, floating solar systems, Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC), ocean energy technologies and other renewable energy solutions capable of supporting sustainable Blue Economy development. 2. Additional opportunities exist in green shipping initiatives, energy-efficient port infrastructure and climate-smart maritime investments.
Maritime Security & Digital Monitoring Systems	1. Participants identified opportunities to strengthen maritime surveillance, vessel tracking systems, coastal monitoring technologies, drone applications and integrated security infrastructure capable of supporting safer maritime transport, sustainable resource management and improved regulatory oversight.
Skills Development & Blue Economy Innovation Ecosystems	1. The growing Blue Economy will require a skilled workforce supported by strong innovation systems. Opportunities therefore exist in maritime academies, technical and vocational training centres, innovation hubs, incubation programmes, entrepreneurship support and stronger partnerships between industry, higher learning institutions and research organizations.

10.2 Research, Innovation and Knowledge Generation Opportunities

Together with the investor-ready opportunities identified during the workshop, participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of research, innovation and evidence generation in supporting sustainable Blue Economy development. Discussions highlighted several knowledge gaps and emerging areas requiring further investigation to strengthen decision-making, policy development and investment planning. The opportunities outlined below reflect priority areas where additional evidence, innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration could support more effective

implementation of Tanzania's Blue Economy agenda while strengthening long-term sustainability and resilience.

Source-to-Sea Systems	1. Participants emphasized the need for research that strengthens integrated planning and management across river basins, coastal zones and marine ecosystems, recognizing the interconnected nature of freshwater and marine environments.
Blue Economy Financing	1. Further research is needed to better understand financial inclusion, risk-sharing mechanisms, blue finance instruments, insurance products, investment de-risking strategies and innovative financing models tailored to Blue Economy sectors.
Value Chain Development	1. Participants highlighted opportunities for research on value addition, market development, industrial upgrading and competitiveness across fisheries, aquaculture, seaweed and other marine-based value chains.
Climate Resilience	1. Future research should strengthen understanding of climate-related risks affecting marine ecosystems, coastal infrastructure, livelihoods and ecosystem services while identifying practical adaptation and resilience measures.
One Health & the Blue Economy	1. The workshop highlighted opportunities for interdisciplinary research linking environmental health, animal health and human wellbeing, recognizing the importance of integrated approaches to sustainable Blue Economy development.
Marine Spatial Planning & Governance	1. Further evidence is required to strengthen Marine Spatial Planning, institutional coordination, policy implementation and governance systems that support sustainable management of marine resources.
Technology and Innovation	1. Participants identified a need for continued research on digital technologies, monitoring systems, surveillance tools, renewable energy applications and other innovations capable of improving productivity, sustainability and resilience across Blue Economy sectors.

11.0 Conclusion

The workshop confirmed that Tanzania possesses significant opportunities to advance an inclusive and sustainable Blue Economy. From marine and freshwater resources to fisheries, aquaculture, coastal tourism, maritime transport, renewable energy and regional trade corridors, the foundations for transformation are firmly in place.

Across the two days of deliberations, participants consistently emphasized that the principal challenge is no longer one of identifying opportunities, but of translating those opportunities into tangible and sustainable development outcomes. Achieving this transformation will require stronger governance and institutional coordination, innovative financing mechanisms, strategic investment in infrastructure and connectivity, evidence-based policymaking, research and innovation, climate-resilient approaches and sustained investment in human capital.

The workshop further demonstrated that the Blue Economy should not be understood solely as an economic agenda. Rather, it is equally a governance, financing, research, environmental and development agenda that depends upon effective collaboration across sectors and institutions. Success will require governments, development partners, financial institutions, researchers, the private sector and coastal communities to work together in ways that are coordinated, evidence-informed and mutually reinforcing.

A particularly important message emerging throughout the workshop was that coastal and lakeside communities should not be viewed merely as beneficiaries of development interventions. Instead, they are custodians, knowledge holders and active partners whose participation, innovation and stewardship are fundamental to the long-term sustainability and success of Tanzania's Blue Economy.

The workshop also reaffirmed the central role of research in supporting national development. Beyond generating knowledge, research was consistently recognized as the foundation for evidence-informed policymaking, effective resource management, technological innovation and adaptive implementation. The commitment by REPOA to develop policy briefs and continue engagement with relevant institutions reflects the importance of ensuring that the knowledge generated through the workshop contributes to practical policy action.

Ultimately, the workshop demonstrated that Tanzania's Blue Economy transformation will depend not only on the abundance of its marine and freshwater resources, but on the country's collective ability to strengthen institutions, mobilize investment, foster innovation, build partnerships and empower communities to steward those resources sustainably. The discussions therefore concluded with a shared recognition that the opportunities are substantial, the foundations are increasingly well established, and the task ahead is to sustain the collaboration, commitment and implementation required to transform potential into inclusive and sustainable development outcomes.

29th Annual Research Workshop—Participants



Guest of Honour



Honourable Ministers / Guests












National Planning Commission




CRDB





MoBE&F



Mzinga Corporation



The Namibia Team



The REPOA Team



Key Note Speakers (09)



Dr. Firas RAAD, World Bank



Prof. Neema M. MORI, Chairperson of the Board of CRDB Bank PLC.



Mr. Ebson UANGUTA, Governor, Bank of Namibia



Mr. Emanuel TUTUBA, Governor, Bank of Tanzania



Dr. Jamal, MSAMI, REPOA



Dr. Nomtha HADI, SAIMI, South Africa



Ms. Hellen DALALI, Equity Bank, Tz.



Prof. Johannes IITEMBU, Sam Nujoma Campus, University of Namibia.



Dr. Obakeng MOLELU, WIOMSA.

REPOA's New Publication—"Policy Innovations for Improved Agricultural Production in Tanzania".











Participants


















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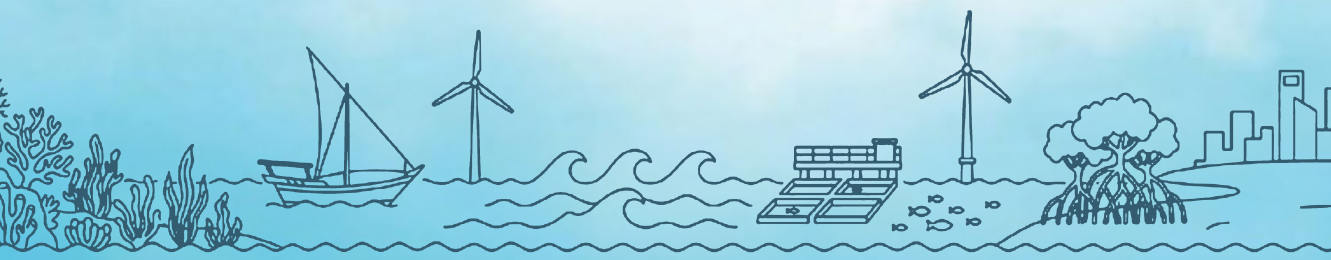
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