

# **Fostering Africa's Blue Economy: Problems and Promises**

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## **Table of Contents**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Abstract.....  | 3  |
| 1.0 Introduction .....                                       | 4  |
| 2.0 The Blue Economy in Africa.....                          | 7  |
| 3.0 Problems and Promises of the Blue Economy in Africa..... | 10 |
| 4.0 Way Forward .....  | 12 |
| 5.0 Conclusion .....   | 15 |
| References .....   | 17 |

## **Fostering Africa's Blue Economy: Problems and Promises**

**Kariuki Muigua\***

### **Abstract**

*The paper critically examines the concept of Blue Economy in Africa. It gives an overview of Blue Economy and how the idea has been embraced in Africa. The paper further discusses the problems and promises of the Blue Economy in Africa. It further suggests reforms towards fostering Africa's Blue Economy.*

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## 1.0 Introduction

Blue Economy has been defined as a 'sustainable ocean-based economic model that is largely dependent on coastal and marine ecosystems and resources, but one that employs environmentally-sound and innovative infrastructure, technologies and practices, including institutional and financing arrangements, for meeting the goals of: (a) sustainable and inclusive development; (b) protecting the coasts and oceans, and reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities; (c) addressing water, energy and food security; (d) protecting the health, livelihoods and welfare of the people in the coastal zone; and (e) fostering an ecosystem-based climate change mitigation and adaptation measures<sup>1</sup>. It has also been described as the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem<sup>2</sup>. The concept of the Blue Economy integrates into a new approach the economic exploitation of the resources of oceans, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water and the conservation of aquatic ecosystems<sup>3</sup>. It represents a basis for rational and sustainable use and conservation of natural resources (both renewable and non-renewable) and their natural habitats<sup>4</sup>.

The concept of Blue Economy emphasizes protecting and sustainably developing oceans, and implementing policies that ensure better stewardship of marine ecosystems, wildlife and other resources<sup>5</sup>. It aims to harmonize economic growth with environmental

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP., 'Leveraging the Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth.' Policy Brief, Issue No 6/2018., Available at <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/ke/Policy-Brief-2018---6---Blue-Economy-for-Inclusive-and-Sustainable-Growth.pdf> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank., 'What is the Blue Economy?' Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2017/06/06/blue-economy> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>3</sup> Africa Union., 'Africa Blue Economy Strategy.' Available at [https://www.aubib.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/sd\\_20200313\\_africa\\_blue\\_economy\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](https://www.aubib.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/sd_20200313_africa_blue_economy_strategy_en.pdf) (Accessed on 17/07/2023\_)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Bove. T., 'What are the Promises of a Blue Economy?' Available at <https://earth.org/blue-economy/#> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

preservation through sustainable practices<sup>6</sup>. This concept recognizes that the oceans, which cover 71% of the Earth's surface, possess untapped potential for various sectors<sup>7</sup>. Blue Economy therefore encompasses diverse but related issues surrounding the exploitation of ocean resources including smart shipping, ports, transportation and global connectivity; employment, job creation and poverty eradication; cities, tourism, resilient coasts and infrastructure; sustainable energy, mineral resources and innovative industries; managing and sustaining marine life, conservation and sustainable economic activities; ending hunger, securing food supplies and promoting good health and sustainable fisheries; climate action, agriculture waste management and pollution-free oceans; maritime security, safety and regulatory enforcement and people, culture, communities and societies<sup>8</sup>.

Blue Economy is vital in the Sustainable Development agenda. The Blue Economy can be considered a component to the larger green economy, which focuses on an efficient and equitable use of resources and emphasizes Sustainable Development without degrading the environment<sup>9</sup>. A healthy ocean is key for a sustainable future both for people and the planet<sup>10</sup>. The world's oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind<sup>11</sup>. A Blue Economy prioritizes all three pillars of sustainability: environmental, economic, and social<sup>12</sup>. In

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<sup>6</sup> Purcell. N., 'What is the Blue Economy?' Available at <https://bluerobotics.com/what-is-the-blue-economy/#:~:text=The%20blue%20economy%20encourages%20the,reduce%20fuel%20consumption%20and%20emissions>. (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Kenya Maritime Authority., 'Report on the Global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 Nairobi, Kenya.' Available at <http://kenyaforimo.kma.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/SBEC-FINAL-REPORT-8-DECEMBER-2018-rev-2-1-2-PDF2-3-compressed.pdf> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>9</sup> Bove. T., 'What are the Promises of a Blue Economy?' Op Cit

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Environment Programme., 'Enabling Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Blue Economies.' Available at <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/oceans-seas/what-we-do/enabling-sustainable-resilient-and-inclusive-blue-economies> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Development Programme., 'Goal 14: Life Below Water.' Available at [https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/below-water?gclid=Cj0KCQjwzdOIBhCNARIsAPMwjbyodp8PZIkguJb9OPW9JC-jZ2fPWPOOvlgrRnGolWtE86-55pcSV5saAqJCEALw\\_wcB](https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/below-water?gclid=Cj0KCQjwzdOIBhCNARIsAPMwjbyodp8PZIkguJb9OPW9JC-jZ2fPWPOOvlgrRnGolWtE86-55pcSV5saAqJCEALw_wcB) (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>12</sup> United Nations., 'Sustainable Blue Economy Vital for Small Countries and Coastal Populations.' Available at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/06/1121562> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

addition to providing goods and services measurable in monetary terms, coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass meadows and wetlands deliver critical ecosystem services such as coastal protection and carbon sequestration<sup>13</sup>. The importance of Blue Economy in the Sustainable Development discourse is recognized under the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development whose goals include to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for Sustainable Development<sup>14</sup>. Enhancing conservation and the sustainable use of ocean-based resources is thus integral in fostering the Blue Economy and Sustainable Development.

It has been observed that Africa has an opportunity to unleash the potential to develop a resilient Blue Economy<sup>15</sup>. With its great potential, the blue economy holds a lot of promise for Africa<sup>16</sup>. As a continent surrounded by some of the world's most important marine biodiversity, strategic maritime trade routes, abundant aquatic resources and blue carbon assets, it has become critically urgent for African countries to embrace blue economy development through impactful policies which support the African continent in meeting global and continental targets<sup>17</sup>. The paper critically discusses the concept of blue economy in Africa. It explores the problems and promises of Blue Economy in Africa. The paper further recommends the way forward towards fostering Africa's Blue Economy for Sustainable Development.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> United Nations., 'Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>15</sup> The World Bank., 'Blue Economy for Resilient Africa Program.' Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2022/11/16/blue-economy-for-resilient-africa-program> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

<sup>16</sup> Muigua. K., 'Securing Our Destiny through Effective Management of the Environment.' Glenwood Publishers Limited, 2020

<sup>17</sup> African Union., 'Shaping a Sustainable Blue Economy for Africa UN Oceans Conference Side Event.' Available at <https://au.int/en/newsevents/20220630/shaping-sustainable-blue-economy-africa-un-oceans-conference-side-event> (Accessed on 17/07/2023)

## 2.0 The Blue Economy in Africa

The Blue Economy is vital in Africa. Africa's Blue Economy is made of vast lakes and rivers and an extensive ocean resource base<sup>18</sup>. A total of 38 out of the African Union's 55 member states are coastal or island states, while 64% of the African continent is covered by a network of freshwater resources such as rivers, lakes, aquifers, basins, watersheds among others<sup>19</sup>. Further, it is estimated that maritime zones under Africa's jurisdiction total about 13 million square kilometers, including territorial seas and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) and approximately 6.5 million square kilometers for the continental shelf (for which countries have jurisdiction over only the seabed)<sup>20</sup>. In addition, the lacustrine (or lake) zones of Africa cover approximately 240,000 square kilometers<sup>21</sup>. These aquatic resources represent tremendous potential for blue food, nutrition and food security, ecosystem services, employment and wealth creation and innovation<sup>22</sup>. It has been argued that all African countries, including landlocked states, can be thought of as political agents in the Blue Economy and their economic futures are strongly associated with issues described as 'marine<sup>23</sup>.' Therefore, the benefits of sound Blue Economy practices such secure coastal states spill over to landlocked states in Africa due to lower transportation and improved access to maritime countries' economies<sup>24</sup>.

The continent therefore has a huge Blue Economy potential that can enhance Sustainable Development of African states. Indeed, the African Union estimates that the Blue

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<sup>18</sup> Africa Renewal., 'Africa's Blue Economy: A Policy Handbook.' Available at <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/documents/africas-blue-economy-policy-handbook> (Accessed on 18/07/2023)

<sup>19</sup> African Union., 'Shaping a Sustainable Blue Economy for Africa UN Oceans Conference Side Event.' Op Cit

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa., 'Africa's Blue Economy: A Policy Handbook.' Available at <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/30130/AfricasBlueEconomy.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (Accessed on 18/07/2023)

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> African Union., 'Shaping a Sustainable Blue Economy for Africa UN Oceans Conference Side Event.' Op Cit

<sup>23</sup> Childs. J & Hicks. C., 'Securing the Blue: Political Ecologies of the Blue Economy in Africa.' *Journal of Political Ecology*, 2019

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

Economy currently generates nearly US\$300 billion for the continent, creating nearly 49 million jobs in the process<sup>25</sup>. These and other crucial benefits most notably food security, livelihoods, and biodiversity are entirely dependent on the ocean's health<sup>26</sup>. Further, it has been observed that international trade is important to many African economies, with more than 90 percent of Africa's imports and exports conducted by sea<sup>27</sup>. Further, it is estimated that freshwater and ocean fish make a vital contribution to the food and nutritional security of over 200 million Africans and provide income for over 10 million<sup>28</sup>. The Blue Economy is thus at the core of Sustainable Development of African countries at the environmental, economic and social levels.

The importance of the Blue Economy in Africa is recognized under the Africa's Union *Agenda 2063* which seeks to achieve a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and Sustainable Development through measures such as exploiting the vast potential of Africa's blue/ocean economy<sup>29</sup>. Agenda 2063 recognizes the potential of the Blue Economy to trigger Sustainable Development in Africa through marine resources, fishing, tourism, energy, port operations, mining and marine transport<sup>30</sup>. It calls for the sustainable utilization and management of the Blue Economy in Africa in order to realize its potential<sup>31</sup>.

In addition, the *Africa Blue Economy Strategy* seeks to achieve an inclusive and sustainable Blue Economy that significantly contributes to Africa's transformation and growth<sup>32</sup>. It aims to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable Blue Economy that

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<sup>25</sup> The World Bank., 'Blue Economy for Resilient Africa Program.' Op Cit

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa., 'Africa's Blue Economy: A Policy Handbook.' Op Cit

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Africa Union., 'Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want.' Available at [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-framework\\_document\\_book.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-framework_document_book.pdf) (Accessed on 18/07/2023)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Africa Union., 'Africa Blue Economy Strategy.' Available at [https://www.au-ibar.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/sd\\_20200313\\_africa\\_blue\\_economy\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](https://www.au-ibar.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/sd_20200313_africa_blue_economy_strategy_en.pdf) (Accessed on 18/07/2023)

becomes a significant contributor to continental transformation and growth, through advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, the growth of an Africa-wide shipping industry, the development of sea, river and lake transport, the management of fishing activities on these aquatic spaces, and the exploitation and beneficiation of deep sea mineral and other resources<sup>33</sup>. The strategy outlines the key drivers of change that are shaping Africa Blue Economy development; strategic and technical challenges to Blue Economy development and identifies priority areas of intervention for sustainable blue economy development in Africa<sup>34</sup>. The Africa Blue Economy Strategy is thus vital in attaining Sustainable Development in Africa.

Finally, the *Africa' Blue Economy Policy Handbook* developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa provides guidelines on mainstreaming the Blue Economy into continental, subregional, and national policies, plans, laws, regulations, and practices for the development of African sustainable Blue Economy strategies<sup>35</sup>. It advocates for an integrated, holistic and participatory approach that includes sustainable use and management of the Blue Economy resources for societal progress in a diverse Africa<sup>36</sup>. The Policy Handbook further acknowledges that there is an emerging opportunity to develop an African Blue Economy narrative that better reflects the kinds of development goals, partnerships, and forms of social reciprocity that African societies need as they move further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>37</sup>. The Policy Handbook can thus enhance innovation in formulation of policies, laws, regulations and practices towards enhancing Sustainable Development of the Blue Economy in Africa.

Africa thus has a great Blue Economy potential. However, several concerns hinder development of a resilient Blue Economy in Africa.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa., 'Africa's Blue Economy: A Policy Handbook.' Op Cit

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

### 3.0 Problems and Promises of the Blue Economy in Africa

It has been noted that the potential benefits of developing the Blue Economy in Africa and across the globe are enormous<sup>38</sup>. Blue economies offer the possibilities of improved efficiency in our land and ocean management, better treatment and governance of marine ecosystems, a more equitable model of global health standards, lower emissions and resilience against climate change<sup>39</sup>. The Blue Economy in Africa provides numerous advantages such as habitat for fish and marine life; carbon sequestration; shoreline protection; waste recycling and storing; ocean processes that influence climate and biodiversity and new emerging activities such as desalination; marine biotechnologies, ocean energy and seabed mining<sup>40</sup>. The Blue Economy is thus at the core of Sustainable Development in Africa.

However, despite this promise, several concerns hinder full realization of the benefits of the Blue Economy in Africa. It has been indicated that unsustainable infrastructure development, inadequate management of natural habitats and resources, and pollution are among the problems threatening the productivity of the Blue Economy in Africa<sup>41</sup>. In addition, climate change-related events such as sea-level rise, land subsidence, storm surge, and coastal flooding are exacerbating the vulnerability of the Blue Economy in Africa<sup>42</sup>.

The African Union also identifies the concerns facing the Blue Economy in Africa to include the increasing menace of illegal fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) that has resulted in massive loss estimated at \$10 billion USD annually; sea piracy and illegal drug trafficking which pose a real threat not only to the safety of vessels and their crew but also to the economies of affected countries particularly in the Gulf of Guinea and South West Indian Ocean; pollution through dumping of toxic wastes as well as

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<sup>38</sup> Bove. T., 'What are the Promises of a Blue Economy?' Op Cit

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> UNDP., 'Leveraging the Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth.' Policy Brief, Issue No 6/2018., Op Cit

<sup>41</sup> Childs. J & Hicks. C., 'Securing the Blue: Political Ecologies of the Blue Economy in Africa.' Op Cit

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

indiscriminate discarding of single use plastics and environmental and climate change and climate variability which impacts on Africa's aquatic systems and food production overall<sup>43</sup>.

Further, the United Nations Development Programme has identified challenges which hinder realization of the full benefits of the Blue Economy in Africa. These challenges include illegal and unregulated fishing, piracy and armed robbery, maritime terrorism, illicit trade in crude oil, arms, drug and human trafficking and smuggling of contraband goods; degradation of marine ecosystems through discharge of oil, the dumping of toxic waste, illegal sand harvesting and the destruction of coral reefs and coastal forests<sup>44</sup>.

The challenges facing the Blue Economy in Africa were considered at the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference held in Nairobi Kenya in November 2018. These concerns include low participation of African countries in the maritime and shipping industry; climate change, marine pollution, unsustainable extraction of marine resources and destruction of coastal habitats; lack of proper education and training framework that promotes maritime education and skills for a sector that requires highly skilled labour force; negative effects of human activities and environmental degradation on marine ecosystems which shrink the potential of the blue economy resources; inadequate capacity (human skills and technology) to tap into the energy and mineral resources within the blue economy sustainably; Unsustainable fishing practices driven by inadequate fisheries management mechanisms; rapidly decreasing fish habitats, including coral reefs and mangroves; loss of aquatic habitats, bio-diversity and shrinking water levels due to pollution and climate change; inadequate inclusion of local communities and peoples in blue economy and a wide range of maritime security threats including piracy, Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, smuggling of people, arms trafficking, narcotics and other illicit goods, terrorism, cybercrimes,

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<sup>43</sup> Africa Union., 'Africa Blue Economy Strategy.' Op Cit

<sup>44</sup> UNDP., 'Leveraging the Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth.' Policy Brief, Issue No 6/2018., Op Cit

proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), threats to freedom of navigation, environmental risks, and natural disasters<sup>45</sup>.

In addition, there have been incidences of maritime boundary disputes between African countries. A key example was the maritime boundary dispute between Kenya and Somalia over 100,000 sq km of maritime space that is believed to contain significant oil and gas deposits as well as rich fisheries<sup>46</sup>. The dispute eventually ended up being determined by the International Court of Justice<sup>47</sup>. Such disputes can potentially ruin relationships between African countries and affect the sustainable utilization of the Blue Economy in Africa.

For Africa, the Blue Economy offers greater opportunity beyond the economy and the environment<sup>48</sup>. It presents African countries with a unique opportunity to achieve their national development objectives, to improve regional integration, and to exert influence in the global setting<sup>49</sup>. However, from the foregoing discussion, it is evident that there are several concerns affecting the effective utilization of the Blue Economy in Africa. There is need to address the foregoing concerns in order to foster the Blue Economy in Africa.

#### **4.0 Way Forward**

The Sustainable Blue Economy Conference identified a number of key political targets that are pertinent in fostering Africa's Blue Economy. These include promoting action-oriented global strategies that places people and the Blue Economy resources at the centre of Sustainable Development; promoting collaboration for sustainable partnerships and projects in the various sectors of the Blue Economy; mobilizing finance from public and

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<sup>45</sup> Kenya Maritime Authority., 'Report on the Global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 Nairobi, Kenya.' Op Cit

<sup>46</sup> International Court of Justice., 'Maritime Delimitation in the Indian Ocean (Somalia v. Kenya).' Available at <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/161> (Accessed on 18/07/2023)

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

<sup>48</sup> Nagy. H & Nene. S., 'Blue Gold: Advancing Blue Economy Governance in Africa.' *Sustainability*, No. 13 of 2021

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

private sources; promoting access to technologies and innovations; sharing best practices on sustainable management of the Blue Economy; capacity building; promoting gender equality and the role and participation of women and youth in the Blue Economy; strengthening science and research to generate and disseminate evidence-based knowledge and information as well to inform policy and decision making; strengthening governance mechanisms; and promoting synergies within and between different levels of governments<sup>50</sup>. These recommendations are vital in fostering the Blue Economy in Africa and can be incorporated into national policy, legal and institutional frameworks towards enhancing the capacity of African countries to harness the Blue Economy for the realization of Sustainable Development.

In addition, several interventions are necessary in various sectors of the Blue Economy in order to foster its realization in Africa. In fisheries and aquaculture, there is need to optimize conservation and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture resources use while minimizing conflicts in order to achieve full wealth-generating potential for fisheries and aquaculture sector<sup>51</sup>. This will enhance the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector while enabling African countries reap from the benefits of the Blue Economy in this sector. Further, in the energy sector there is need to unlock the sustainable blue energy potential through measures such as creating conducive regulatory environment for the development and application of sustainable blue energy<sup>52</sup>. This will trigger investments and realization of the energy potential of the Blue Economy thus enabling African countries meet their energy targets among other goals<sup>53</sup>. African countries can also tap into the potential of the Blue Economy in order to meet the growing demand of mineral resources and oil and gas for economic prosperity<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>50</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa., 'The Nairobi Statement of Intent on Advancing the Global Sustainable Blue Economy.' Available at <https://archive.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/SROs/EA/HIGH-LEVEL-SUSTAINABLE-BLUE-ECONOMY-CONFERENCE-2018/nairobi-statement-of-intent-advancing-global-sustainable-blue-economy.pdf> (Accessed on 19/07/2023)

<sup>51</sup> Africa Union., 'Africa Blue Economy Strategy.' Op Cit

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

<sup>53</sup> Nagy. H & Nene. S., 'Blue Gold: Advancing Blue Economy Governance in Africa.' Op Cit

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

There is also need for African countries to tap into the potential of the Blue Economy in the transport sector. It has been pointed out that there has been low participation of African countries in the maritime and shipping industry<sup>55</sup>. However, African countries can tap into the potential of the Blue Economy in this sector through measures such as modernization of African ports and carrying cargoes of African countries at reasonable rates<sup>56</sup>. In addition, there is need develop integrated strategies for sustainable tourism and infrastructures in order to realize the full potential of the Blue Economy in Africa<sup>57</sup>.

In addition, one of the priority areas in fostering Africa's Blue Economy is curbing pollution of Blue Economy resources such as oceans and lakes<sup>58</sup>. Efforts towards curbing pollution should include addressing the effects of agriculture residue chemicals and soil erosion from highlands which end up polluting water bodies<sup>59</sup>. In addition, it is necessary to enhance resilience of the Blue Economy through climate change mitigation and adaptation by promoting the integration of blue carbon and ecosystem services into climate change policies and Coastal and Aquatic policies<sup>60</sup>. African Countries should consider embracing nature based solution for the enhancement of Coastal and Aquatic Ecosystem contribution to Biodiversity and climate change achievements<sup>61</sup>.

Finally, it is paramount for African countries to promote good governance in the Blue Economy sector and establish regional and sub-regional cooperation in the Blue Economy<sup>62</sup>. This will be vital in ensure security and safety in the African maritime area

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<sup>55</sup> Kenya Maritime Authority., 'Report on the Global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 Nairobi, Kenya.' Op Cit

<sup>56</sup> Mohanty. S & Dash. P., 'Economic Opportunities in Blue Economy in Africa.' Available at [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-15-5550-3\\_6](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-15-5550-3_6) (Accessed on 19/07/2023)

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Muigua. K., 'Securing Our Destiny through Effective Management of the Environment.' Op Cit

<sup>59</sup> Ibid

<sup>60</sup> Techera..E., 'Supporting Blue Economy Agenda: Fisheries, Food Security and Climate Change in the Indian Ocean.' *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, Volume 14, No. 1, 2018

<sup>61</sup> Ibid

<sup>62</sup> Roy. A., 'Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean: Governance Perspectives for Sustainable Development in the Region.' Available at [https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ORF\\_Occasional\\_Paper\\_181\\_Blue\\_Economy.pdf](https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ORF_Occasional_Paper_181_Blue_Economy.pdf) (Accessed on 19/07/2023)

and addressing concerns such as piracy and drug trafficking<sup>63</sup>. It also important for African countries to foster good relationships in order to prevent disputes concerning the Blue Economy such as the maritime boundary delimitation dispute between Kenya and Somalia<sup>64</sup>. This will enable African countries to realize the full benefits of the Blue Economy.

## 5.0 Conclusion

The concept of the Blue Economy is very pertinent in Africa and across the globe. Africa has an opportunity to unleash the potential to develop a resilient blue economy<sup>65</sup>. With its great potential, the blue economy holds a lot of promise for Africa<sup>66</sup>. The Blue Economy holds the promise of enhancing economic, social and environmental development in Africa<sup>67</sup>. However, several problems hinder Africa from realizing the full promise of the Blue Economy. These concerns include illegal and unregulated fishing, piracy and armed robbery, maritime terrorism, illicit trade in crude oil, arms, drug and human trafficking and smuggling of contraband goods; degradation of marine ecosystems through discharge of oil, the dumping of toxic waste, illegal sand harvesting and the destruction of coral reefs and coastal forests<sup>68</sup>. There is need to address these challenges through measures such as promoting good governance in the Blue Economy sector; establishing regional and sub- regional cooperation; pollution control; enhancing the climate resilience of the Blue Economy sector; and tapping into the benefits of the various sectors of the blue economy such as energy, mining, transport, tourism and

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid

<sup>64</sup> Olorundami. F., 'The Kenya/Somalia Maritime Boundary Delimitation Dispute.' Available at <http://ndl.ethernet.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/61052/1/Zeray%20Yihdego.pdf#page=173> (Accessed on 19/07/2023)

<sup>65</sup> The World Bank., 'Blue Economy for Resilient Africa Program.' Op Ci

<sup>66</sup> Muigua. K., 'Securing Our Destiny through Effective Management of the Environment.' Op Cit

<sup>67</sup> United Nations., 'Sustainable Blue Economy Vital for Small Countries and Coastal Populations.' Op Cit

<sup>68</sup> UNDP., 'Leveraging the Blue Economy for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth.' Policy Brief, Issue No 6/2018., Op Cit

fishing by establishing sustainable practices<sup>69</sup>. Through this, the economic, social and environmental benefits of the Blue Economy will be realized towards achieving the visions of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and in particular Goal 14 that seeks to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for Sustainable Development<sup>70</sup>. Fostering Africa's Blue Economy is an achievable dream.

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<sup>69</sup> Africa Union., 'Africa Blue Economy Strategy.' Op Cit

<sup>70</sup> United Nations., 'Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' Op Cit

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