



REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

MINISTRY OF THE SEA, INLAND WATERS AND FISHERIES

“

2^a Edition of the Growing Blue Conference



“Investing in Ocean’s Health is securing Planet’s future”

VILANKULO, 18 – 19, November 2021

CONCEPT NOTE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The importance of the Seas and Oceans to humankind as a source of life, oxygen producer, ecosystem support, climate regulator, food producer, source of employment and as a water reserve has been recognized globally. Emphasis is on the United Nations Organization, through Agenda 2030, which defines the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG14 on the "conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."
2. In addition, raising the level of understanding of other relevant international legal frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), will provide a basis for structured cooperation between nations on the maritime side, leading to the proclamation of the Seas and Oceans as factors of sustained development and security of the countries. On the other hand, it will allow for the promotion of permanent collaboration, based on an inter-sectoral and interagency approach, for effective and integrated management of the coastal and maritime areas in the least developed countries.
3. The cross-border nature of the seas and oceans highlights the increasing challenges associated with global threats such as climate change, population growth, and degradation of the marine environment, loss of biodiversity and the high risk of pollution such as the proliferation of plastic waste, combined with issues related to maritime safety. Addressing these challenges requires harmonized and concerted approaches among the various nations that share this resource or are indirectly linked to it.

The Western Indian Ocean region, particularly the Mozambique Channel, is rich in biodiversity and coastal marine ecosystems, ranging from coral reefs stretching from the coast of Kenya to the northern part of Mozambique. Mangrove forests in the Zambezi Delta, coastal dunes rich in mineral resources, marine grasses that harbour a unique population of remnant dolphins in the region and a great diversity of fishing resources - source of income and substance for the population in the coastal areas. In addition, the region is also rich in hydrocarbons, particularly in the Rovuma Basin.

4. The intensive use of existing fishery resources and the utilization of the sea transport route in this region, combined with the advent of hydrocarbon exploration, require a well-integrated, harmonized and concerted approach. This is particularly relevant in the Mozambique Channel where illegal fishing persists due to the inability of the countries to control their territorial waters, exacerbated by their limited institutional capacity to shape the development of a sustainable Blue Economy. These facts require strong collaboration and coordination at national, regional and international levels. The geo-strategic location of Mozambique makes it necessary for it to proactively assume responsibility for promoting the development of a sustainable Blue Economy, in the light of the its political and legal instruments, aligned with those of regional, continental and international nature.
5. Mozambique intends to join the global call-to-action movement launched by the United Nations and various bodies responsible for the sustainability of the oceans in the framework of the implementation of SDG14, **establishing a permanent dialogue meeting, on biennial basis, designated the "GROWING BLUE" Conference.** Within the thematic areas indicated in this document, the Conference approach will focus on the country and the western region of the Indian Ocean (geographical zone of Mozambique). The aim is for promoting consultation, alignment and knowledge sharing required to effectively fulfilling the commitments made within the framework of the implementation of SDG14.
6. The edition of the first conference recognizes that knowledge based on scientific research and technology, is the basic key to the development of the Blue Economy. Considering the national and regional context,

characterized by limited scientific knowledge and technological development, there is a need to target investment resources, both in training and in strengthening or building technical and institutional capacity enabling science and technology to feed into the development of a sustainable Blue Economy.

7. The Blue Economy is considered the new frontier of the renaissance at a global level. This has led to an increasing number of countries engaging in the formulation of Policies and Strategies that integrate this concept as a basis for socio-economic transformation, through integrated and harmonized initiatives and strategies, as well as joint action among countries to develop the latent potential that the Seas and Oceans can offer humanity.
8. Emphasis is placed on **the African Union 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategy** (AU 2050 objectives) and the **Blue Economy Policy Manual for Africa**, which besides raising the level of understanding of other relevant international frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) lay the foundations for structured cooperation on the maritime front. This will allow proclaiming the Oceans as factors of sustained development and maritime security of countries, as well as promoting collaboration based on inter-sectoral and inter-agency approaches to manage coastal and marine areas in Africa.
9. Thus, the permanent challenge towards effective sustainable blue development that emerges from the need to translate the global, continental and regional agenda into concrete and transformational directives and actions at individual country level and in the context of blocks of countries constitutes the reasoning behind the organization and materialization of the series of conferences - object of this Concept Note.

II. THEMATIC AREAS

10. For this Conference focus will be on four thematic areas, namely:

- ❖ **OCEAN GOVERNANCE**
 - Marine Spatial Plan (MSP)
 - Marine Pollution
 - Biodiversity / Conservation
 - Climate Change/ Food Security (Fisheries, aquaculture, etc)
 - Maritime Security
- ❖ **OCEAN INNOVATION**
 - Science
 - Technology
 - Innovation
- ❖ **OCEAN HIGHWAYS**
 - Transport / Shipping
 - Ports
 - Maritime Commerce
 - Tourism
- ❖ **OCEAN POWER**
 - Renewable Energy
 - Oil
 - Gas

11. For the first Conference to be held on **18 to 19 November 2021**, the following slogan is defined:

“Investing in Ocean’s Health is securing Planet’s future”

III. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

12. The 2^a Edition of the conference **intends** to evaluate progress achieved in promoting and integrating the development of sea economies in the context of a sustainable Blue Economy, based on robust scientific and technological knowledge.
13. The general objective defined will be based on **approaches** that allow:
 - A. Continuous reflection on the regional stage of sustainable use of the oceans;
 - B. Sharing country's main advances in ocean governance, including on the commitments made at the 1st Edition of Growing Blue Conference;
 - C. Consolidate the involvement and cooperation between the various stakeholders in the use of the oceans;
 - D. Dissemination of investment and resource mobilization mechanisms for the development of the Blue Economy in Mozambique;
 - E. Promote investment possibilities in the areas of the blue economy by leveraging and facilitating public-private partnerships.
14. The expected **results** are aligned with the objectives identified above with a view to defining subsequent post-conference steps, which are translated into the following:
 - 1) Shared experiences and progress on models and approaches for implementing Blue Economy initiatives to maximize the potential of the Oceans, particularly Maritime Spatial Planning.
 - 2) Commitments made with the various stakeholders and Cooperation Partners, for the development of scientific and technological research capacity that meets national and regional needs for blue growth.
 - 3) Elements identified for the improvement of a common development vision around the shared resource that is the Indian Ocean, and how to make actions converge to fulfill the commitments assumed in the scope of the implementation of the SDG14.
 - 4) Cooperation strengthened in order to anchor the implementation of the Blue Economy in a strong regional and international collaboration through structured approaches, integrated models and operationalization mechanisms (institutional and financial).
 - 5) Mapping the challenges and opportunities for the intervention of different actors in the current context, resulting from the public health situation, that can enrich on going actions of developing a Blue Economy Action Plan for reference by implementers, investors and international cooperation partners.

IV. CONTENT AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

In the 2nd Edition of the Conference, progress and ongoing models will be shared from countries with a record of successful implementation of different areas of Blue Economy the work and guidelines of regional umbrella organizations, strategies and programmes of countries in the Western Indian Ocean region and ongoing approaches in other domains, including initiatives such as MSP, strategies for mitigation and adaptation to climate change,

prevention of marine litter, particularly from plastic, promotion of eco-tourism among other, indicating results achieved so far and subsequent action lines.

A. Main Event

15. The Conference lasts for two days with plenary and parallel sessions, the concluding and closing session will be in the afternoon of the second day. The related sessions and activities are geared towards the achievement of the objectives and results defined for the Conference.
16. Each panel will have a moderator and will consist of 3 or 4 speakers on the featured topic, with room for input from the audience. For each session, a summary will be produced with the main points of the presentations and interventions, relevant messages, identified partnerships, conclusions and recommendations to be captured in the Proceedings of the event and to guide for follow-up actions by respective actors and identities.
17. The themes will be on the environmental, socioeconomic and governance aspects of the sea and moderation will be carried out by different entities with responsibilities in the implementation of Sea Policies and Strategies, as well as national and international specialists in the field.

B. Exhibition

There will be an exhibition on the site of the event related to the theme of the Conference, to be setup by institutions (public or private) and organizations with interest and use of in the sea.

C. Parallel meetings

There will be rooms available for participants that wish to hold parallel meetings.

V. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

To attain the set objectives, the "Growing Blue" Conference, which is focus on the Western Indian Ocean Region, aims to bring together around 1000 participants in a hybrid format (400 presents and virtual for others), from national, regional and international entities with multiple interests and competencies in the fields of the Blue Economy and sea governance, joining decision-makers, implementers, companies, development partners, financial institutions, research & teaching institutions, civil society and NGOs with activities related to the sea, coastal areas, oceans and its ecosystems.

VI. EVENT INFORMATION

- A.**
- B. Date of the event:** 18 to 19 November 2021
- B. Location:** Vilankulo Municipality, Inhambane Province
- C. Organization**
 - **Organizer:** Government of Mozambique (Ministry of the Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries)
 - **Potential Sponsors:** Cooperating partners (national and international)

GROWING BLUE!