Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security,
Blue Economy and Fisheries
(Blue Economy and Fisheries Division)

LES ASSISES DE L'Océan 2025

Consultative Dialogues REPORT

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List of Acronyms

AFRC	Albion Fisheries Research Centre
AHRIM	Association of Hoteliers and Restaurateurs of Mauritius
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIS	Automatic Identification System
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
BA	Beach Authority
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
BEU	Blue Economy Unit
BM	Business Mauritius
BOM	Bank of Mauritius
CA	Competent Authority
CEB	Central Electricity Board
CHCL	Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd
CSMZAE	Department of Continental Shelf, Maritime Zone Administration and Exploration
DBM	Development Bank of Mauritius
DOWA	Deep Ocean Water Application
EDB	Economic Development Board
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zones
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
EU	European Union
MITCI	Ministry of Information Technology, Communication, and Innovation
MIE	Mauritius Institute of Education
MITD	Mauritius Institute of Training and Development
MLIR	Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations
MMTA	Mauritius Maritime Training Academy
MOAC	Ministry of Art and Culture
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
MOI	Mauritius Oceanography Institute
MOT	Ministry of Tourism
MOYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
MPA	Mauritius Ports Authority
MQA	Mauritius Qualification Authority
MEHR	Ministry of Education and Human Resource
MRIC	Mauritius Research and Innovation Council
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
MSISSNS	Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
MSR	Marine Scientific Research
MTESR	Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research

FAD	Fish Aggregating Device
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FITEC	Fisheries Training and Extension Centre
FMM	Ferme Marine de Mahébourg
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
FPS	Fisheries Protection Service
FRC	Financial Reporting Council
FSC	Financial Services Commission
FWF	Fishermen Welfare Fund
GBF	Global Biodiversity Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
HEC	Higher Education Council
HRDC	Human Resources Development Council Mauritius
HSBC	The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ICTA	Information and Communication Technologies Authority of Mauritius
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
INCOIS	Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Association
NCG	National Coast Guard
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHM	National History Museum
NPCC	National Productivity and Competitiveness Council
NPCS	National Parks and Conservation Service
OECM	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
OES	Ocean Energy System
OTEC	Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion
PML	Polytechnic Mauritius Ltd
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PTO	Port Terminal Operators
R&D	Research and Development
RGSC	Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEM	Stock Exchange Mauritius
SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
SLO	State Law Office
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
SOLAS	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea

IPR	Intellectual property Rights
ISSB	International Sustainability Standards Board
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
MACOSS	Mauritius Council of Social Services
MAIFSBEF	Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries
MARENA	Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency
MBA	Mauritius Banker's Association
MCCI	Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry
MEPU	Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
MESWMCC	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
MGEFW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare
MIBL	Mauritius Institute of Biotechnology Ltd
SST	Sea Surface Temperature
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SWIOP	Southern West Indian Ocean Program
TA	Tourism Authority
TCAC	Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
VMCA	Voluntary Marine Conservation Area
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
VR	Virtual Reality

Executive Summary

Mauritius and the region face accelerating pressures on marine ecosystems due to climate change, biodiversity loss, and unsustainable practices. At the same time, the blue economy offers significant opportunities for innovation, inclusive growth, and regional leadership. The dialogues highlighted the need for integrated governance, strengthened human capital, sustainable financing, and enhanced cooperation to unlock this potential.

The pre-consultative dialogues for Les Assises de L'Océan 2025 underscored that Mauritius stands at a pivotal moment in shaping a resilient, inclusive, and innovation-driven blue economy, with stakeholders highlighting urgent challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, unsustainable practices, and governance gaps, alongside major opportunities for sustainable growth. Participants emphasized the need to restore ecosystems, integrate climate adaptation, and scale nature-based solutions; empower youth, advance gender equality, and strengthen social awareness; invest in education, technical training, and research to build a skilled blue workforce; and promote sustainable marine tourism that balances economic benefits with ecological integrity. The dialogues further stressed the importance of research, ICT, and innovation for evidence-based decision-making; accelerating marine renewable energy to support climate goals and energy security; modernising ports and maritime transport through green technologies and digitalisation; and reforming fisheries and aquaculture to secure food systems and livelihoods. Blue diplomacy and ocean governance emerged as essential to harmonise national and regional efforts with global frameworks such as UNCLOS, the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, while blue finance was identified as a critical enabler requiring innovative instruments, stronger institutional capacity, and transparent mechanisms to mobilise investment. Collectively, these priorities outline a clear pathway for Mauritius to strengthen governance, unlock financing, build human capital, and foster cross-sectoral partnerships, positioning the ocean as a driver of resilience, prosperity, and long-term sustainable development.

Introduction

Between 07 and 18 October 2025, the Ministry, in collaboration with its sponsors and partners, convened a series of pre-consultative dialogues as a critical preparatory phase for Les Assises de l'Océan 2025. These dialogues were conceived as a participatory and inclusive process, designed to ensure that the forthcoming Assises would be firmly grounded in evidence, collective wisdom, and the diverse perspectives of stakeholders across national, regional, and international levels.

The dialogues brought together a wide range of actors, including government institutions, regional organisations, civil society representatives, academic and research institutions, private sector leaders, and community voices, to deliberate on the pressing challenges and opportunities facing the ocean. This multi-stakeholder approach underscored the Ministry's commitment to transparency, inclusivity, and shared responsibility in shaping the future of ocean governance.

Over the course of the two weeks consultations, participants engaged in structured discussions on key thematic areas as follows:

1) Climate Change, Biodiversity and Conservation – 07 October 2025;
2) Education and Marine Jobs – 08 October 2025;
3) Sustainable Marine Tourism – 09 October 2025;
4) Research and Development, Exploration, ICT and Innovation – 10 October 2025;
5) Exploring the Ocean: Youth, Gender and Social Awareness (Part I) – 11 October 2025;
6) Marine Renewable Energy – 13 October 2025;
7) Green Ports, Maritime Transport and Trade – 14 October 2025;
8) Fisheries, Aquaculture and Food Security – 15 October 2025;
9) Blue Diplomacy and Ocean Governance – 16 October 2025;
10) Blue Finance – 17 October 2025; and
11) Exploring the Ocean: Youth, Gender and Social Awareness (Part II) – 18 October 2025.

These dialogues served as a forum for knowledge exchange and as a mechanism for consensus-building and strategic alignment. They provided an opportunity to identify priority actions, highlight synergies among stakeholders, and surface innovative solutions that will inform the agenda of Les Assises de l'Océan 2025. More importantly, the pre-consultative dialogues reinforced the principle that dialogue must lead to action. By fostering collaboration across sectors and scales, the consultations laid the groundwork for both ambitious and implementable actions. They also strengthened stakeholder ownership, ensuring that the outcomes of Les Assises de l'Océan 2025 will reflect a shared vision and collective responsibility for safeguarding marine ecosystems and advancing sustainable ocean development.

In the same line, a consultative workshop with key stakeholders was carried out on 10 March 2026 at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy to identify the key actions and mechanisms that are needed to move the recommendations of the pre-consultative dialogues forward and the report was finalised and validated on 10 April 2026 at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy.

In this context, the dialogues were designed to align national and regional priorities with international commitments and frameworks, including:

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14: Life Below Water, which calls for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources.
- The Paris Agreement and its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which highlight the role of oceans and coastal ecosystems in climate mitigation and adaptation.
- The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which sets ambitious targets for halting biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems, including marine and coastal habitats.
- The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), which emphasizes the need for science-driven policy and innovation to achieve sustainable ocean management.

Aim and Objectives

The pre-consultative dialogues were convened with the overarching aim of ensuring that Les Assises de l'Océan 2025 is informed by inclusive, evidence-based, and action-oriented perspectives. Specifically, the dialogues sought to achieve the following objectives:

- **Facilitate Inclusive Participation:** Ensure that voices from government, civil society, academia, private sector, and local communities are represented, thereby strengthening ownership and legitimacy of the outcomes.
- **Identify Priority Themes and Challenges:** Deliberate on key issues such as sustainable ocean governance, climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and the blue economy, while highlighting cross-cutting concerns like financing, institutional capacity, and regional cooperation.
- **Promote Knowledge Exchange and Consensus-Building:** Provide a platform for sharing scientific evidence, traditional knowledge, and innovative practices, fostering mutual understanding and alignment among diverse stakeholders.
- **Strengthen Policy Coherence and Regional Alignment:** Harmonise national strategies with regional and international frameworks, ensuring that commitments under the SDGs, Paris Agreement, and Global Biodiversity Framework are integrated into the agenda of Les Assises de l'Océan 2025.
- **Mobilise Partnerships and Resources:** Encourage collaboration across sectors and scales, while identifying opportunities for innovative financing and institutional support to advance sustainable ocean development.
- **Lay the Groundwork for Actionable Commitments:** Translate dialogue into concrete recommendations and pathways that will inform the deliberations and decisions of Les Assises de l'Océan 2025, ensuring that outcomes are both ambitious and implementable.

This report documents the discussions, opportunities, challenges, recommendations and key actions/mechanisms needed to develop and strengthen the blue economy sector in Mauritius.

Theme 1: Climate Change, Biodiversity and Conservation

Climate change represents one of the most pressing challenges to ocean health, directly impacting marine ecosystems, coastal communities, and the services they provide. Rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and increasing temperatures are accelerating biodiversity loss and threatening the resilience of marine and coastal habitats. These changes undermine food security, livelihoods, and the ecological balance that sustains the blue economy.

Within the pre-consultative dialogues, stakeholders emphasised the urgent need to strengthen conservation measures, restore degraded ecosystems, and integrate climate adaptation into ocean governance. The discussions highlighted both the vulnerabilities and the opportunities: while climate change poses significant risks, it also creates momentum for innovation, regional cooperation, and the adoption of nature-based solutions.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to safeguard biodiversity, enhance ecosystem resilience, and ensure that conservation efforts are aligned with national priorities and global frameworks such as the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14: Life Below Water), while strengthening ocean-based climate solutions through alignment between national climate and biodiversity strategies.

Session 1: Marine Ecosystems and Climate Change

The session provided a comprehensive overview of regional and global initiatives to safeguard marine biodiversity in the context of climate change. Presentations highlighted the Great Blue Wall, a flagship program designed to conserve marine ecosystems while generating employment opportunities and fostering strategic partnerships. Discussions emphasized the critical role of international organizations in advancing biodiversity and climate resilience projects in Mauritius and Seychelles.

Scientific evidence on ocean heat absorption and coral stress underscored the urgency of accelerated climate action. Blue carbon strategies were presented, focusing on nature-based solutions such as seagrass ecosystems to mitigate emissions. A locally led reef conservation project further illustrated the importance of community engagement, restoration trials, and youth outreach in sustaining marine ecosystems.

Participants raised questions regarding Mauritius's ability to meet its marine protection targets, including GBF target 30x30, including possibility of designating new MPAs and Voluntary Marine Conservation Areas (VMCAs) including other areas of Mauritius, Rodrigues and St Brandon as well as Mauritius' ability for enforcement and control. Responses pointed to new initiatives and the strategic use of the Chagos Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as key pathways forward. The dialogue concluded with a call to redefine coastal zones through an integrated "ridge-to-reef" approach, ensuring that both climate pressures and human impacts are addressed in a holistic manner.

Session 2: Regulatory and Policy Frameworks for the protection and conservation of marine ecosystems and biodiversity in Mauritius

The session focused on key marine conservation challenges in Mauritius. Presentations addressed priority issues including marine mammal protection, the impacts of climate change, overfishing, and updated regulatory measures under the Fisheries Act 2023. Ongoing marine spatial planning efforts were shared, highlighting stakeholder engagement and the mapping of protected areas.

A call to action underscored the need to strengthen local capacity and advance new initiatives such as the establishment of a marine biodiversity corridor. Participants raised concerns regarding conservation effectiveness and public awareness, with particular emphasis on the importance of improving regulations and their enforcement, education about marine mammals, especially whales, and introducing structured guidelines for whale and dolphin watching, modelled on practices in best international practices. Given their ecological, economic, and conservation significance, and Mauritius' unique resident sperm whale population, cetaceans warrant integrated consideration in the Blue Economy strategy, with whale and dolphin watching managed under precautionary, welfare-centred frameworks and limits on expansion.

Discussions also touched on the planning of wind farms, the enforcement of marine regulations, and the future of the Chagos Marine Protected Area (MPA). It was clarified that the new MPA is being developed in consultation with Chagos communities and will incorporate designated resettlement zones. Finally, concerns about coastal protection were raised, with wave breakers proposed as a potential solution to mitigate coral loss and coastal erosion.

Session 3: Coastal Resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction and Marine Pollution

The session highlighted regional conservation projects and coastal resilience, with particular attention to plastic pollution, sustainable tourism, and community engagement. Concerns were raised regarding the scope of plastic waste collection under the IslandPlas project, especially in relation to marine debris such as PET bottles and discarded fishing gear. It was clarified that while the project currently prioritizes inland waste, efforts are expanding to include beach and ocean clean-ups, alongside pilots for waste segregation and the development of regional recycling hubs.

Coastal infrastructure planning was also scrutinized, particularly the siting of hotels near shorelines. Responses emphasized a transition toward nature-based solutions and more sustainable development practices. The status of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), with a focus on Chagos, was discussed, underscoring ongoing efforts to integrate community consultation and designate resettlement zones.

Finally, participants called for broader pollution monitoring beyond plastics, including sedimentation, turbidity, and noise, in alignment with international water quality standards.

Discussions Highlights

The discussions emphasized the need to address climate change as a defining challenge for ocean health, focusing on its impacts on marine ecosystems, coastal communities, and the blue economy. Participants highlighted both risks and opportunities: while rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss undermine food security and livelihoods, momentum is building for innovation, regional cooperation, and nature-based solutions. Flagship initiatives such as the Great Blue Wall, reef restoration, and blue carbon strategies were showcased, alongside regulatory reforms under the Fisheries Act 2023 and marine spatial planning. Key concerns included Mauritius's ability to meet GBF 30x30 targets, enforcement of marine regulations, and integrating cetacean welfare into the Blue Economy strategy. The dialogue underscored the importance of tackling coastal resilience challenges, plastic pollution, unsustainable tourism, erosion, and infrastructure planning, through holistic "ridge-to-reef" approaches, stronger community engagement, and alignment with global frameworks including the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and SDG 14.

Table 1: Key actionable priorities in climate, biodiversity and conservation.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Marine Ecosystems protection, conservation and restoration	Lack of comprehensive marine ecosystem mapping	Complete and consolidate national marine ecosystem mapping. Urgently establish blue/green finance mechanisms to deliver finance-related recommendations and scale nature-based solutions, drawing on lessons from Seychelles' and other SIDS's experience. Promote effective community stewardship for all VMCAs through locally led management guidelines and basic ecosystem monitoring. Develop a unified national marine conservation strategy Conduct risk mapping and enforce protective zones.	MAIFSBEF; MESWMCC	1. Create a Biodiversity network with all stakeholders 2. Establish a clear national framework to guide governance, management, and monitoring, ensuring sustained biodiversity outcomes. 3. Revive the National Coral Reef and sea turtle Network 4. Enhance the existing Science-to-Policy Platform (Leverage existing Science-to-Policy Platform to ensure an integrated, non-fragmented approach.)

		Conduct inclusive capacity building and planning processes to promote community-based resilience and stewardship programmes.		
Strengthen the enforcement of marine environment protection	Inadequate enforcement mechanisms, capacity and inconsistent accountability	Use of technology for monitoring and enforcement e.g drones coupled with development of local institutional capacity. Encourage community stewardship for enforcement and whistle-blowing.	MAIFSBEF (FPS), NCG	1. Create a community surveillance with direct communication links to enforcement authorities. e.g. area-specific instant messaging channels such as WhatsApp. 2. Reinforce the existing collaboration framework between FPS and NCG. 3. To upskill the existing workforce and offer continued opportunities for training and new recruitments. 4. To capitalize on new technologies and equipment investment.
Digital, rule-based permit system	Lengthy permit system	More discussion on improving permit systems, and set up a committee with all relevant authorities Enhance permit processes for faster authorisation and implementation of work. Creation of a SPOC/single portal to help streamline and accelerate the process.	MAIFSBEF, CSMZAE	1. Valorise and re-adapt the Marine Scientific Research (MSR) under the Dept. CSMZAE to act as a one-stop-shop committee to review all permits for all types of research projects. 2. Create an online application system/portal for permit request and issue.
Ridge-to-reef integrated conservation approaches	Fragmented and outdated biodiversity/stock data	Clarify pollution definitions and enforce international standards	MESWMCC	1. To review the definition through the existing ICZM committee.

Develop ecologically representative, well-connected and equitable governed climate-smart MPAs	Limited vulnerability mapping and data integration	Conduct vulnerability mapping to identify climate refugia for MPAs. Integrate climate change considerations into legislation and planning. Create "No Take Zones" extending offshore and around dive sites/MPAs.	MAIFSBEF, CSMZAE	1. A policy decision to be taken on the issue of "No Take Zones". 2. To be taken into consideration in the Marine Spatial Planning Coordination Committee to design and propose specific locations in concertation with relevant stakeholders.
Innovative financing: "Blue Tax," sustainable alternative livelihoods and conservation	Limited expertise in ecosystem economic evaluation and weak technology transfer	NSIF to channel tax to environmental initiatives. Review laws addressing environmental offenses by different industries. Introduction of an eco-contribution scheme in Mauritius, either nationally or regionally (e.g., payment of a conservation levy, Climate and sustainability fund with revenues directed to authorities NGOs and foundations implementing biodiversity and ecosystem protection and enforcement projects in the region.	MOF, MAIFSBEF	1. MAIFSBEF to work with the Climate Finance Unit to design and implement.
Education campaigns and	Institutional weaknesses: poor	Scale up ocean literacy on nature-based solutions with	MTESR, MEHR, Universities.	1. Integrate ocean literacy modules into primary and align with secondary curricula.

marine science in curricula	coordination, bureaucratic hurdles	engineering interventions (artificial reefs). Promote access to job prospects in marine jobs. Promote stakeholder inclusion and public education campaigns.		2. Develop micro-credentials, modules, and internships in marine jobs to link education with workforce development and ocean literacy.
Public–private partnerships and NGO engagement	Fragmented governance, agencies working in silos	Implement circular economy measures: recycling hubs, waste segregation, community engagement.	MOF, EDB, MACOSS, MESWMCC. BM.	1. Establish a cross-agency "Circular Economy Coordination Task Force/steering committee" under the MESMWCC to reduce duplication and align mandates. 2. Develop a shared roadmap with clear roles for EDB and Business Mauritius, MACOSS (community engagement), and NGOs (implementation support).
Digital platforms for data sharing and transparency	Coastal vulnerability: erosion, flooding, unsustainable resource extraction	Invest in research, training, and technology transfer for restoration and monitoring. Optimise existing platform for data sharing	CSMZAE, MOI	1. Audit and optimize the existing national data-sharing platform (e.g Mauritius Ocean Observatory E-Platform by CSMZAE) to ensure usability, accessibility, and transparency. 2. Standardize data formats and protocols across ministries, research institutes, and NGOs.
Species protection for blue economy (sharks, rays, moray eels)	Continued extraction undermines conservation; weak enforcement	Expand protected species list; enforce strict bans on extraction; Review of rare, culturally-important and/or vulnerable species status	MAIFSBEF	1. Conduct rapid assessments of rare and culturally important species to update conservation status under the National Coral Reef Network or Biodiversity Network. 2. Expand the national list of protected species to include sharks, rays, and moray eels and to develop sensitisation materials.

Ban destructive fishing practices (seine fishing)	Indiscriminate destruction of turtles, protected species, coral reefs	Enforce total ban on seine fishing while ensuring proper transition of net fishermen to alternative fishing method	MAIFSBEF, FPS	1. Enforce policy decision to transition net fishermen to other fishing method (e.g. FAD Fishing, basket trap, etc.)
Install mooring buoys at dive sites and tourism-related sea-based activities	Anchor damage to coral reefs	MSP for mooring areas around island; Install mooring buoys for safety and security at sea and to prevent ecosystem damage using collaborative approach (e.g authorities, dive clubs, centres, private sectors, NGOs).	MOT, MAIFSBEF, TA, CSMZAE, BA	1. Use the marine tourism Sea-based committee to conduct a survey to identify priority mooring areas around the island and implement such through the Marine spatial planning (MSP) exercise 2. To make a MSP management plan accessible 3. To identify and designate areas for slipways and removal of boats

Theme 2: Education and Marine Jobs

Education and capacity-building are fundamental pillars for advancing sustainable ocean governance and unlocking the potential of the blue economy. The pre-consultative dialogues underscored that equipping current and future generations with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies is essential to address the complex challenges of marine conservation, climate resilience, and resource management.

At the same time, the ocean offers significant opportunities for employment creation and economic diversification. From fisheries and aquaculture to maritime transport, renewable energy, tourism, and emerging sectors such as marine biotechnology, the blue economy can generate inclusive and sustainable jobs. However, realising this potential requires targeted investment in education, vocational training, and research, as well as stronger linkages between academic institutions, industry, and policy frameworks.

Discussions highlighted both opportunities and constraints: while there is growing demand for skilled professionals in marine sciences and ocean-related industries, gaps persist in technical training, access to quality education, and alignment between curricula and labour market needs. It was pointed out during the discussion that only a couple of schools including Imperial College and Mauritius College (Boys) offer opportunities to students to take Marine Science as a subject for Cambridge School Certificate. At the Imperial College, Marine Science was introduced at lower 6 level in 2011 and the first batch of students was prepared for Higher School Certificate (HSC) in 2012. However, Cambridge decided to offer this subject for examination at School Certificate (SC) level for the last time in November 2023. The reason is unknown. Insufficient candidates could be a possibility

Addressing these challenges is critical to ensuring that education systems and job creation strategies contribute to resilience, innovation, and equitable growth.

This theme therefore focuses on the intersection of education, skills development, and employment opportunities in the marine sector, identifying pathways to strengthen human capital, foster innovation, and build a workforce capable of driving sustainable ocean development.

Session 1: Unlocking the Potential of Education and Marine Jobs in Mauritius

The session examined the intersection of education, training, and employment in ocean sectors. Student involvement in marine mapping, conservation, and tourism initiatives was discussed, alongside collaboration with NGOs and government agencies. Ongoing training programs, particularly for cruise ship employment, were noted, with emphasis on expanding partnerships and aligning with international maritime standards. Participants agreed on the need for stronger institutional collaboration, clearer integration of technical and legal expertise, and well-defined pathways to support youth entry into maritime careers.

Session 2: Skills and Training Needs in the Blue Economy Sector

Participants discussed ways to strengthen collaboration among NGOs, educational institutions, and local communities to advance youth empowerment and environmental restoration. The dialogue underscored the value of experiential learning, inclusive education, and ocean literacy as tools for addressing broader social challenges. It was recommended that a national marine skills matrix mapping entry-level jobs, technician/technologist jobs, required certifications, institutions delivering training, and progression routes into employment. There was broad agreement that marine education should extend beyond formal curricula, incorporating co-curricular and field-based activities to deepen engagement and that a clearer distinction should be made between ocean literacy, academic marine science, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)/applied technical training, and professional certification or licensing. The importance of public-private partnerships and practical training was also highlighted as essential for equipping students with the skills needed to succeed in the labour market.

Session 3: Career Pathways and Opportunities in Oceanic Sectors

The session explored the future of marine careers, sustainable fishing practices, and the growing need for interdisciplinary education. Discussions centered on expanding internship opportunities and adapting curricula to incorporate entrepreneurship and management skills. Participants acknowledged persistent challenges in enforcement at sea and emphasized the importance of strengthening national capacity to address these issues through a National Marine Careers pathway framework. There was broad consensus on the value of regional collaboration, practical training, and curriculum reform to better align education with the evolving demands of the blue economy. While funding and accessibility remain significant barriers, initiatives such as Recognition of Prior Learning and regional inclusivity were highlighted as promising pathways to advance both workforce development and sustainability.

Discussions Highlights

The discussions emphasized the need to strengthen education and capacity-building as foundations for sustainable ocean governance and the blue economy, focusing on equipping youth and professionals with marine knowledge, technical skills, and practical competencies. Participants highlighted persistent gaps in training, limited access to quality education, and misalignment between curricula and labour market needs, noting the discontinuation of Marine Science at Cambridge School Certificate level as a setback. The dialogue underscored the importance of experiential learning, NGO–academic partnerships, and vocational training, while calling for curriculum reform, regional collaboration, and stronger public-private linkages to expand career pathways. Initiatives such as Recognition of Prior Learning and inclusive training programs were recognized as vital for addressing enforcement challenges, fostering innovation, and ensuring equitable growth through sustainable ocean employment.

Table 2: Key actionable priorities in the Education and Marine Jobs sectors.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Industry-driven training programs responsive to evolving maritime needs	Lack of standardized certifications and unclear career pathways	Conduct Training Needs Analysis (TNA) to align curricula with workforce requirements To enhance responsiveness to labour market dynamics, work-based learning components need to be integrated within training programmes, and the recognition of industry-designed micro-credentials as part of formal qualification pathways.	All stakeholders, MMTA, MQA, MIE	1. Identify demand and supply through market survey. 2. Standardisation of training across the sector. 3. Proper regulations to be set up. 4. Sensitisation and awareness on a larger scale (open days). 5. Restructuring the career guidance unit. 6. Awarding power to be delegated to the MMTA for more leverage. 7. Use of a model or an AI generated architecture for future projections. 8. Ensure that programs are accredited, benchmarked against international standards, and aligned with regional qualification frameworks
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Micro credentials and the TVET	Misalignment between qualifications and job market demands	To define clear academic and professional pathways that span Technical and Vocational Education and Training, undergraduate and postgraduate education, and lifelong learning modalities, including micro-credentials	MQA, MIE, Universities, HEC	1. To formulate a National Blue Economy Human Capital Framework aligned with the National Qualifications Framework. 2. Strengthen TVET programs by aligning curricula with industry needs and to decentralise such programs with a view to broaden access. 3. Based on market survey from TNA.

		and Recognition of Prior Learning. Expand micro-credentials, TVET, and RPL pathways for wider access		
Mandatory internships and practical exposure	Limited practical training and foundation-level deficiencies	Integrate structured internships and work placements nationally and internationally	MITD, Universities, PML, MAIFSBEF, Private Sectors	1. Work based placement mandatory in course structures/programmes.
Emerging skills: marine engineering, robotics, ICT, biotechnology, disaster management	Shortage of technical/scientific expertise and adaptability to new technologies	Invest in training for marine engineering, ICT, robotics, biotechnology, and disaster management	PML, MITD, Universities MOI, MITCI, MIBL, MESWMCC, MAIFSBEF	1. Develop collaborations with specific MoUs and agreements relative to joint programs, courses and trainings. 2. Review of curriculum to suit emerging sectors. 3. To Develop Partnerships with international organisations/institutions on specific sectors.
Growth sectors: aquaculture, renewable energy, marine technology, ecotourism, bioplastics	Financial constraints, limited funding, inadequate equipment	Prioritize investment in aquaculture, renewable energy, marine technology, and ecotourism	MAIFSBEF, MARENA, MEPU, MESWMCC, MOT, MOI, MIBL, MOF, MCCI, BM	1. Establish a consultative platform to host meetings between different stakeholders to better grasp the concepts including private sector, civil society.

Entrepreneurship in shipping, robotics, marine science research	Weak legal frameworks, poor enforcement, fragmented governance	Reform legal frameworks, strengthen enforcement, and establish a unified national strategy	EDB, NPCC, MRIC, SME Mauritius, DBM, NGOs, MITCI, MOI, MAIFSBEF, SLO	1. Establish targeted micro-finance schemes for women, youth, and coastal entrepreneurs in the blue economy. 2. Create incubation hubs for marine and climate-tech startups (digital monitoring, ocean data platforms, sustainable aquaculture technologies). 3. Blue entrepreneurship: promote venture-building programs that pair entrepreneurs with mentors, investors, and NGOs. 4. Review current legal framework and develop robust policies in line with stakeholders' needs and requirements
Public–private partnerships and international collaborations	Social barriers: misconceptions, low awareness, limited local interest	Foster partnerships, advisory boards, and joint curriculum development with industry	MOFA, SLO, Diplomatic Corps, MCCI, BM, EDB, Universities, NGOs, MQA, Private Sectors	1. Create of a blue economy chamber 2. Introduce a digital one-stop-shop mechanism for blue economy entrepreneurs and investors. 3. Develop a set of key messages (policy briefs) for circulation to all stakeholders 4. Collaboration with the Min. of Foreign Affairs to integrate blue economy priorities into foreign policy and international negotiations. 5. Integrate blue economy advocacy with public diplomacy tools within the Blue Economy Strategy.

Digital platforms for data sharing and transparency	Geographical limitations and security concerns	Improve funding access, awareness campaigns, and strategies to overcome geographic/security barriers	MITCI, PMO, ICTA, MOF, MAIFSBEF, MOFA, MRIC	1. Design tailored campaigns for targeted groups to build understanding of blue economy opportunities and responsibilities. 2. Establish regular multi-stakeholder forums (government, private sector, NGOs, academia) to co-create policies and strategies. 3. Develop a proper IPR framework for Mauritius
Inclusive workforce development	Monitoring frameworks focused mainly on infrastructure/environment, limited social impact tracking	Expand monitoring to include social indicators (gender, region, job quality, income stability, grievance responsiveness) To include higher education and human capital indicators, such as graduate output in marine-related fields, research productivity, and employment outcomes.	MGEFW, Statistics Mauritius, MSISSNS, MLIR, MRHR	1. Use the Ocean Equity Index as a guiding tool for measuring inclusiveness, fairness, and sustainability in blue economy initiatives. 2. Review existing ocean governance frameworks and identify gaps in enforcement, compliance, and equity. 3. Mainstream gender equality throughout the sector.
National capacity to absorb external funding for job creation	Weak institutional capacity and limited social development expertise	Increase collaboration with NGOs.	MSISSNS, HEC, MACOSS	1. Establish dedicated project units with social expertise and partner with NGOs for community engagement.
Gender Mainstreaming	Male dominated industry	Gender equality and equity	All stakeholders	1. Embed gender equality and equity as core principles of blue economy governance and workforce development.

				2. Increase women's participation through dedicated training and capacity-building.

Theme 3: Sustainable Marine Tourism

Marine and coastal tourism represents one of the fastest-growing sectors of the blue economy, offering significant opportunities for economic diversification, job creation, and cultural exchange. At the same time, it is a sector that directly depends on the health and resilience of marine ecosystems. The pre-consultative dialogues highlighted that while tourism can be a powerful driver of sustainable development, it also carries risks of environmental degradation, overexploitation of fragile habitats, and socio-economic imbalances if not properly managed.

Stakeholders emphasised the need to promote sustainable marine tourism models that balance economic growth with ecological integrity and community well-being. This includes integrating conservation principles into tourism planning, encouraging eco-tourism initiatives, and ensuring that local communities benefit equitably from tourism revenues. Discussions also pointed to the importance of strengthening regulatory frameworks, investing in infrastructure that minimises environmental impact, and fostering partnerships between governments, private operators, and civil society.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to harness the potential of marine tourism while safeguarding biodiversity and cultural heritage. It underscores the importance of aligning tourism development with national priorities and international commitments, ensuring that the sector contributes to climate resilience, inclusive growth, and the long-term sustainability of ocean resources.

Session 1: Tourism – A Pillar for the Mauritian Economy

The session examined both the challenges and opportunities of aligning tourism growth with sustainability objectives. Participants voiced concerns over delays in permitting eco-innovations such as coral restoration and electric boat tours, while questioning the lack of coordination among institutions. It was widely agreed that inter-agency collaboration remains fragmented, though efforts are underway to establish a unified platform to streamline approval processes. The strategic tourism blueprint highlights a shift toward value-driven tourism, the management of environmental carrying capacity, and the promotion of inland and cultural tourism to ease pressure on coastal areas. Addressing carrying capacity, particularly within critical coastal and marine ecosystems, was identified as a priority for sustainable tourism development.

Session 2: Eco-tourism Standards and Certification, Marine Heritage Protection and Promotion

The session examined eco-tourism standards and marine heritage, with critical discussions on certification processes, sustainable practices, and the preservation of cultural and natural assets. The Mauritius Tourism Authority (TA) presented its initiative to position Mauritius as a green destination by 2030, which will soon become mandatory. While participants expressed concern over delays in licensing procedures, it was noted that stakeholders will shortly receive details of a pilot e-licensing system currently under development. Discussions also addressed the balance between heritage preservation and diver access to wreck sites, highlighting recent ecological

studies assessing their environmental impact and potential to contribute to sustainable tourism and the blue economy.

Session 3: Tourism Economic Development, Policy, Governance and Community Engagement

The session provided insights into ongoing efforts to promote the sustainable use of marine resources and harness the potential of the Blue Economy to improve livelihoods and drive economic growth. Discussions highlighted critical challenges facing sustainable marine ecotourism in Mauritius, particularly the limitations of current legislation and the significant economic losses linked to biodiversity threats, such as the sharp decline in iconic species like sharks and turtles due to poaching and illegal fishing, as well as overuse of cetaceans due to whale and dolphin watching activities. The dialogue also showcased impactful private-sector initiatives aimed at enhancing youth employability and entrepreneurship, with maritime training presented as a practical pathway to empower young people and foster inclusive economic development. The role of scientific knowledge in serving societal needs was emphasized, including systems such as the Tsunami Early Warning System, Ocean State Forecasts, and the innovative Small Vessel Advisory Services (SVAS), which enhance the safety of seafarers and coastal communities while supporting the growth of the Blue Economy.

Discussions Highlights

The discussions emphasized the need to align tourism growth with sustainability, focusing on eco-tourism standards, certification processes, and the protection of marine heritage sites. Participants highlighted delays in licensing and limited awareness as key barriers, while noting ongoing efforts to streamline approvals through e-licensing systems. The dialogue underscored the importance of ecosystem restoration, managing anthropogenic activities considering environmental carrying capacity, and diversifying tourism toward inland and cultural experiences to reduce coastal pressure. Private-sector initiatives and community engagement were recognized as vital for ensuring resilience, competitiveness, and inclusive benefits from sustainable marine tourism.

Table 3: Key actionable priorities in the Marine Tourism Industry.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Targeted training for all personnel working at sea	Low awareness and limited community engagement on ecotourism benefits	Conduct TNA and expand training programs with mandatory internships (e.g. Dolphin watching)	TA, MMTA, Hotels Groups, AHRIM, Marine Training Schools, NCG	1. Develop trainings for all staffs working at sea (e.g. cruises, skippers) in Navigation/ first aid /Conservation Marine/ Health and Safety 2. To include a thematic/module (biodiversity) in the skipper training and examination. 3. To clarify the enforcement role between TA and NCG
Expanded certification programs for small hotels and operators	Risk of greenwashing and inadequate impact studies	Provide financial incentives and additional assessors to make certification accessible	AHRIM, MOT, TA, MOF	1. Focus on International certifications (IC)/ workshops (e.g: WTTC and Green Key & Earth check) 2. Propose incentives to SMEs
Promotion of ecosystem restoration as part of tourism branding	Weak communication and inadequate protection of sensitive ecosystems (reefs, lagoons) and species.	Establish a code of conduct for sensitive marine areas with penalties for non-compliance.	MESWMCC, MAIFSBEF	1. Ensure coastal community engagement in conservation under the ICZM Committee.
Monitoring of boat activity and licensing	Fragmented governance and weak enforcement capacity	Strengthen inter-ministerial synergy and establish	TA, NCG, MAIFSBEF (FPS)	1. Install automatic identification system (AIS) in every boats.

		dedicated enforcement agencies		2. Establish a monitoring, compliance and carrying capacity plan at every key embarkation points. 3. Monitor catch by Sport/Recreation Fishing
Value-driven tourism and diversification into inland/cultural tourism	Financial and administrative constraints and limited equipment availability	Provide financial and non-financial incentives to support SMEs and improve equipment access	MOT, SME Mauritius, Training Schools, DBM	1. Provide targeted subsidies, tax breaks, and low-interest loans to tourism SMEs focusing on sustainable sea-based tourism. 2. Establish grant schemes for equipment acquisition (transport, cultural site infrastructure, digital tools). 3. Offer technical assistance and training programs for SMEs in marketing, digital platforms, and sustainable tourism practices.

Theme 4: Research, Development, ICT and Innovation

Research, technological development, and innovation are indispensable drivers of sustainable ocean governance and the blue economy. The pre-consultative dialogues underscored that advancing marine science, harnessing digital technologies, and fostering innovation are critical to addressing the complex challenges posed by climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource management.

Participants highlighted the importance of strengthening research capacity and knowledge generation, ensuring that scientific evidence informs policy decisions and management strategies. At the same time, the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), including digital monitoring systems, data platforms, remote sensing tools and marine biotechnology, was recognised as essential for improving transparency, accountability, and efficiency in ocean governance.

Innovation was also identified as a catalyst for new opportunities in the marine sector, from renewable energy and biotechnology to sustainable aquaculture and smart infrastructure. However, discussions revealed persistent constraints such as limited investment in research, gaps in technological infrastructure, and the need for stronger collaboration between academia, industry, and government institutions.

This theme therefore focuses on building a robust ecosystem for research, ICT, and innovation, one that bridges science and policy, fosters cross-sectoral partnerships, and mobilises resources to unlock the full potential of the blue economy. By doing so, stakeholders can ensure that ocean governance is not only evidence-based but also adaptive, forward-looking, and resilient in the face of emerging challenges.

Session 1: Research and Development in the Blue Economy Sector

The session highlighted the importance of cross-sector collaboration in driving marine research and innovation. Discussions explored how to promote ocean science among youth, strengthen partnerships between academia and industry, and expand the potential of aquaculture beyond food production. Environmental concerns were raised regarding deep-sea mining and carbon release, alongside the need for updated data on seabed minerals and petroleum reserves. Participants emphasized the value of building institutional capacity, providing scholarships, and fostering stronger synergies between science and private enterprise. While technologies such as acoustic pingers were considered, it was underscored that local testing and inclusive collaboration are essential to ensure effective and sustainable technology adoption.

Session 2: Marine Biotechnology, Commercialization and Legal Framework

Marine biotechnology was highlighted as a strategic sector with transformative potential across health, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and materials science, driven by pioneering research on resources such as seaweed, sponges, and fish waste. The discussions underscored the need for robust research and innovation ecosystems, calling for enhanced RandD infrastructure, talent

development, and strengthened international partnerships. Governance and collaboration emerged as central themes, with proposals to institutionalize cooperation through councils and steering committees to better align science with policy. Education and capacity building took centre stage, with the ambitious proposal to establish a Faculty of Ocean Studies, positioning Mauritius as a regional hub for marine science. Finally, science diplomacy and strategic planning were emphasized as vital tools to integrate scientific expertise into policymaking, foster resilience among researchers, and guide long-term investments toward a sustainable ocean future.

Session 3: ICT and Innovation in the Blue Economy Sector

The session underscored key themes in advancing ocean research, including the accessibility of funding through MRIC for applied marine projects, the integration of AI to optimize data collection and reduce costs, and the critical role of marine acoustics in environmental monitoring and coastal protection. Participants highlighted the need for a centralized data platform to enhance collaboration and transparency, while proposing the establishment of a national council to unify marine science efforts. Overall, the discussions reflected the dynamic and multidisciplinary nature of ocean research in Mauritius and the wider Indian Ocean region, emphasizing the country's potential to assume regional leadership and drive sustainable development.

Discussions Highlights

The discussions under this theme explored how research, technological innovation, and digital integration can drive the sustainable growth of Mauritius's Blue Economy. Participants emphasized the importance of strengthening RandD ecosystems, fostering international partnerships, and leveraging ICT tools to optimize data collection, transparency, and collaboration. Exploration of marine resources, coupled with innovation in biotechnology and ocean technologies, was highlighted as a pathway to position Mauritius as a regional leader in science, resilience, and sustainable development.

Table 4: Key actionable priorities in Research and Development, ICT and Innovation Sectors.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Access to international finance, ESG/SDG-aligned investment, carbon credit schemes, PPPs and NGOs	Limited access to finance due to bureaucratic process Limited access to finance, markets, data, and technology	Digital, rule-based permit system and timely processing of project assessments Expand ESG/SDG financing, carbon credits, PPPs, and introduce seed funding, venture capital, IPO-friendly tools	MOF	1. Leverage each ministry's existing representation on the Climate Finance Unit to oversee project design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting for climate finance projects.
Collaborative platforms, ocean incubators, and a Blue Economy Hub	Governance gaps, poor coordination, and limited enforcement capacity	Form councils/subcommittees with permanent/ad hoc expert members to streamline governance and accelerate development	MAIFSBEF	1. To be established a blue economy expert platform under the BEU
Alignment with SDGs and UN frameworks; protection of IPR and impact management systems	Marine biotechnology hurdles: permit delays, knowledge gaps, capacity constraints	Build R&D infrastructure, strengthen human resources, and streamline permit clearances for biotech innovation Alignment with Nagoya Protocol	NPCS, MRIC, MOFA	1. Train researchers, SMEs, and entrepreneurs on IPR, compliance, and commercialization pathways.
Research in marine pharmaceuticals, fisheries science,	Inadequate infrastructure and	Prioritize key research areas	MAIFSBEF, MOI,	1. To establish a Blue Economy Research Working Group and Committee.

aquaculture biotechnology, mineral exploration	fragmented research priorities	To coordinate a national research agenda for the blue economy	CSMZAE, MTESR	2. To identify and develop targeted doctoral training, international research partnerships, and structured science-to-policy interfaces to ensure that research outcomes effectively inform decision-making processes.
Integration of AI for ocean monitoring and coastal protection	Limited data access and knowledge sharing	Leverage existing platforms of data sharing (e.g Ocean observatory platform/ Observatoire de L'Environment) to feed AI model	MITCI, CSMZAE, MOI, Universities, MTESR, MRIC	1. Establish an Inter-ministerial /parastatal body/ civil society/ private sectors committee to carry out the work 2. Carry out training of and develop trainings for officers in AI integration in Research works.

Theme 5: Youth, Gender and Social Awareness

Youth engagement, gender equality, and social awareness are fundamental pillars of sustainable ocean governance and the blue economy. The pre-consultative dialogues underscored that empowering young people, fostering gender inclusivity, and raising public awareness are not only issues of fairness but also vital drivers of innovation, resilience, and long-term impact. Participants emphasized the need to invest in youth leadership and capacity-building, ensuring that the next generation is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to actively shape ocean stewardship. Advancing gender equality in marine sectors was likewise identified as a priority, requiring targeted efforts to dismantle barriers, strengthen women's participation in decision-making, and guarantee equitable access to resources and employment.

The consultations brought together youth and stakeholders to generate ideas for revitalizing the blue economy through inclusive dialogue aligned with government priorities. Key sessions included youth initiatives, gender equity, food security, and education integration, alongside opportunities in fisheries, entrepreneurship, and ocean-based industries. The dialogue featured an interactive format beginning with a brief panel designed to inspire participants and pose challenging questions. Attendees then formed working groups to develop recommendations, which are presented below under the main categories discussed. The dialogue acknowledged that achieving resilience requires robust climate-sensitive social nets and investments in human well-being, including continuity of essential health services and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention-measures.

This theme highlights the intersection of youth empowerment, gender inclusivity, and social awareness, recognizing that sustainable ocean governance cannot be achieved without the active participation of all segments of society.

Session 1: Blue Generation: Education, Innovation and Blue Careers

Under the session theme the focus was on equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities needed to drive sustainable ocean development. Integrating marine studies into school curricula and promoting STEM education in fields such as ocean engineering and sustainable aquaculture will build a strong foundation, while partnerships with international universities, eco-clubs, and awareness platforms can foster early interest. Ocean literacy, hands-on training, and interactive learning experiences will empower youth to become active stewards of the marine environment, supported by modern tools like VR headsets, online platforms, and mobile applications that bridge access gaps. Public awareness campaigns through digital social media channels can promote skipper licenses, training opportunities, and career pathways, ensuring information reaches younger audiences effectively. At the same time, the creation of a Green Agenda for terrestrial sustainability and a Blue Agenda for marine resource protection will provide a holistic framework for balancing ecological preservation with economic growth. Preserving cultural heritage through initiatives like a Fishermen's Museum will safeguard traditions while inspiring innovation, and youth involvement in policy-making through internships, ambassador programs, councils, and incubators will ensure transparency and inclusivity. Finally, advancing digitalisation in licensing, data management, and communication

will streamline processes, improve efficiency, and open new career pathways, positioning the next generation as leaders of a resilient and innovative Blue Economy.

Session 2: Gender Equality and Leadership in the Marine Sector

In this session theme discussions emphasized both the vital contributions of women and the barriers they continue to face in fisheries and marine-related activities. The panelists highlighted women's roles in fishing, youth development, and institutional engagement, while also underscoring challenges including patriarchal norms, dual household responsibilities, limited access to training, licensing difficulties, restricted financial incentives, and the impacts of climate change. Most women remain confined to processing roles rather than active fishing, with offshore activities perceived as socially inappropriate. To overcome these barriers, recommendations included targeted training programs, mentorship for girls, flexible loans and grants, inclusive licensing criteria, gender quotas, and the revalorisation of artisanal roles. Solutions such as cooperatives, financial incentives, and structured recognition platforms were also proposed to empower women, particularly in ecosystem preservation projects like mangrove restoration, where women have already demonstrated strong voluntary commitment. Together, these measures aim to dismantle structural inequalities and position women as key leaders in the Blue Economy.

Session 3: The Grassroots and the Coast: Social Awareness and Community Engagement

Under this session theme, participants emphasized the importance of building strong partnerships between government, the private sector, and NGOs, supported by networking platforms and project-writing assistance to enhance capacity. Social and community awareness was identified as a cross-cutting enabler, with campaigns, journalist training, field trips, museums, and digital applications for traditional practices fostering responsibility, stewardship, and climate change awareness. Effective communication was seen as vital to bridge gaps between experts and the public, while consultations must involve legitimate fishermen and coastal communities to ensure relevance. Local initiatives such as Sov la Natir's mangrove restoration project demonstrated the long-term impact of community-led conservation, highlighting the need for structured recognition of grassroots contributions. Addressing land-based pollution, strengthening inclusive consultation and legal reforms, and building NGO capacity in project design and funding access were considered essential. Shared co-management practices, stronger enforcement mechanisms, equitable distribution of ocean funding, and comprehensive coastal reforms integrating science, traditional knowledge, and participatory governance were all proposed to ensure resilience, transparency, and sustainable development along the coast.

Discussions Highlights

The consultations brought together youth and stakeholders in an inclusive dialogue to generate ideas for revitalizing Mauritius' Blue Economy in line with government priorities. Discussions emphasized the importance of youth initiatives, gender equity, food security, and education integration, while also identifying opportunities in fisheries, entrepreneurship, and ocean-based

industries. In interactive breakout sessions, participants highlighted the barriers women face in the fishing sector due to cultural norms, limited incentives, and bureaucratic hurdles, recommending targeted training, financial support, and cooperatives to promote inclusivity. Education and skills development emerged as a priority, with calls to integrate marine studies into school curricula, strengthen STEM pathways, and leverage modern technologies such as VR and online platforms to enhance access. Social awareness was seen as critical, with proposals for campaigns, journalist training, cultural initiatives, and stronger legal enforcement to support sustainable practices. Youth engagement in policy-making was encouraged through internships, ambassador programs, and incubators to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. Finally, participants stressed the need for partnerships and synergy among government, private sector, and NGOs, supported by networking platforms and project-writing assistance, to accelerate sustainable marine development. Together, these recommendations underscore that a resilient and inclusive Blue Economy must be built on empowerment, education, awareness, and collaboration.

Table 5: Key actionable priorities in Youth, Gender and Social Awareness Inclusion.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Integration of marine studies, STEM focus on ocean engineering and aquaculture	Limited awareness of ocean careers; weak digital infrastructure	Introduce "ocean literacy to ocean careers pathway" in schools. Promote STEM pathways.	MOYS, MIE, Universities, MEHR, MITD, PML, RGSC, NPCC, MTESR	1. Integrate ocean literacy modules into primary and align with secondary curricula, and to coastal communities, highlighting careers in fisheries, aquaculture, ocean engineering, marine sciences and others. 2. Establish STEM-focused collaborative programs at universities and training institutions, with specialized tracks in ocean engineering and aquaculture. 3. Use media to conduct national awareness campaigns showcasing career opportunities in marine sciences, aquaculture, ocean engineering and others.
VR, apps, online learning, and digital platforms for data management and communication	Bureaucratic hurdles in career pathways and inefficient, opaque processes	Develop VR/online training platforms; expand digital access. Advance digitalisation in licensing and governance	MITCI, MEHR, MAIFSBEF	1. Create a One-stop shop app to include learning, training, sensitisation. 2. Creation of an app as a one stop shop providing information on career pathway, communication, list of courses/trainings in the marine sector.
Youth internships, ambassador programs,	Mismatch between youth aspirations and opportunities	Launch youth ambassador programs, internships, incubators	MOYS, MEHR, NPCC, MAIFSBEF, HEC, MTESR	1. Make work placement mandatory for all tertiary level courses. 2. Design and launch a youth ambassador program on Blue Economy

incubators, councils				
Preservation of cultural and natural heritage through Fishermen's Museum	Declining transmission of cultural heritage	Sensitise about marine cultural and natural patrimony (e.g seasons and migration) through a Fishermen's Museum to safeguard traditions	MOAC, MAIFSBEF, MOF, NHM, Private Sectors	1. Collaboration with foundations, associations or Natural History Museum to establish a Fishermen's Museum / Corner
Women's engagement in artisanal fisheries and ecosystem restoration	Patriarchal norms; household responsibilities	Targeted training and mentorship for women	All Stakeholders, MGEFW, MSISSNS, MAIFSBEF, NGOs	1. Carry out mapping to identify training needs, types and specific target groups. 2. The Gender Focal Point of each Ministry to identify areas for training to empower women in Blue Economy Sectors.
Marine entrepreneurship potential	Limited access to finance and licensing	Introduce flexible loans/grants; inclusive licensing criteria	DBM, MOF, MAIFSBEF	1. Develop schemes/sources of funding 2. Develop communication strategy for schemes and funding available
Gender quotas for representation	Glass ceiling effect in institutions	Establish gender quotas in marine institutions	MGEFW, MLIR, Statistics Mauritius	1. Design and establish a structured mentorship and career development programme for women in ocean-related sectors, with clear participation targets and monitoring mechanisms 2. Explore the introduction of gender-responsive measures, including quotas where appropriate, with legal guidance from the Attorney General's

				Office to ensure alignment with national legislation
Recognition of women's contributions	Lack of recognition for artisanal roles	Re-valorise artisanal roles; structured recognition platforms	MGEFW, MAIFSBEF	1. Carry out surveys and studies on the socio-economic impact of women's contributions including informal roles. 2. Develop and disseminate evidence-based reports with gender-disaggregated data to inform policymaking, strengthen visibility, and support inclusive governance
Expanded monitoring of social impacts	Current frameworks focus mainly on infrastructure / environment	Integrate social indicators into monitoring system	Universities, MSISSNS, Statistics Mauritius, MAIFSBEF, HRDC, HEC	1. Identification of indicators 2. Drafting of policies for decision making
Government–NGO–private sector collaboration	Governance gaps; poor coordination	Strengthen partnerships; provide project-writing support	MAIFSBEF, NGOs, EDB, MCCI	1. To define and establish a protocol for continued collaboration and support 2. Creation of Blue Chamber
Social media campaigns, journalist training, community engagement	Communication gaps between experts and public	Promote awareness campaigns; train journalists	MAIFSBEF	1. To review the regulations for allowing social media presence 2. To establish a clear social media and digital communication services policy 3. Creation of a dedicated communication cell in the Blue Economy Unit

Community-led conservation	Limited recognition of grassroots contributions	Support and scale community-led conservation projects	MAIFSBEF, CSMZAE, NGOs	1. Identify Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECM) areas
Co-management practices for shared decision-making	Weak enforcement and monitoring	Expand co-management pilots with communities	MAIFSBEF, CSMZAE, NGOs, Fishermen Associations, MESWMCC,	1. Carry out feasibility studies for co-management practices 2. Establish collaboration protocol for effective decision making
NGO capacity building for funding access	Grassroots NGOs disadvantaged in funding	Provide training in project writing, grant applications, reporting	NGOs, MACOSS, Universities, MOF, MSISSNS, MESWMCC	1. Organize workshops for grassroots NGOs on donor requirements, proposal structuring, and logical frameworks. 2. Provide templates and toolkits for project design, budgeting, and monitoring.
Transition support for communities into new blue economy jobs	Risks of livelihood disruption without structured support	Introduce retraining schemes, livelihood grants, and targeted apprenticeships	MAIFSBEF, Universities, Marine Training Institutions, MGEFW	1. Develop structured reskilling and transition programmes targeting fishers, coastal workers, and tourism operators, enabling diversification into aquaculture, marine services, and ocean-based technical professions, with tailored training pathways for different groups 2. Strengthen partnerships with TVET institutions to deliver certified, competency-based training programmes, complemented by community-level awareness and

				outreach initiatives through the National Women Council, Women Empowerment Centres, Social Welfare Centres, and Community Centres, with technical input and resource persons from the MAIFSABEF.

Theme 6: Marine Renewable Energy

Marine renewable energy is emerging as a cornerstone of the blue economy, offering significant potential to diversify energy sources, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and contribute to climate resilience. The pre-consultative dialogues underscored that harnessing the power of the ocean, as a major technological challenge for the Republic of Mauritius to develop marine renewable energy potential.

Marine energy or Ocean Energy Systems (OES) is one of the very attractive renewable energy sources. Oceans cover about three-quarters of the earth surface, and several techniques have been tested and practiced for extracting energy from these mighty oceans. The major advantage of marine energy as compared to other renewable sources is its consistency and predictability. The potential of only wave energy is comparable to the total of nuclear or hydropower.

Several technologies and methods are applied for extracting energy from the oceans. There are several emerging technologies being employed for utilising marine energy. The five major applied technologies are: Wave energy (wave power), Tidal energy, Tidal currents, Salinity gradients, and Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC).

Participants highlighted the dual benefits of marine renewable energy: on one hand, it provides a clean and abundant energy source aligned with global climate commitments; on the other, it creates opportunities for innovation, investment, and job creation in coastal communities. However, discussions also revealed constraints such as high initial capital costs, technological and infrastructural gaps, regulatory challenges, and the need for stronger institutional frameworks to support large-scale deployment.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to accelerate the adoption of marine renewable energy, including fostering public–private partnerships, mobilising climate finance, strengthening research and development, and ensuring that energy projects are environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. By advancing marine renewable energy, stakeholders can contribute to both national climate goals and the broader international agenda under the Paris Agreement, while positioning the ocean as a driver of resilience, innovation, and sustainable growth.

Session 1: Unlocking the Potential of Marine Renewable Energy in Mauritius

The session explored the strategic and collaborative aspects of developing marine renewable energy. Participants highlighted key issues such as stakeholder alignment, the technical reliability of proposed energy solutions, and the potential integration of hydrogen into the energy mix. The discussions underscored the need to build trust, capitalize on shared priorities, particularly climate action, and ensure that strategic plans clearly reflect the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Session 2: Resource Mapping, Technical Feasibility, Technology and Environmental and Social Impacts

The session centred on the environmental and technical feasibility of marine energy projects. Participants raised questions about underwater sound pollution, cyclone impacts on infrastructure, delays in marina development, and the need for spatial planning that incorporates updated ecological data. Emphasis was placed on the necessity of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), improved data accessibility, and the early-stage consideration of environmental risks. While there was broad agreement on the potential of renewable energy, participants also highlighted the practical challenges associated with implementation and the choice of appropriate technologies and solutions.

Session 3: Financing and Investment Mechanisms

The session examined funding pathways for innovation in marine renewable energy. Key questions focused on how researchers can access financing beyond the early stages of development, as well as the processes and conditions associated with both public and private investment. Participants reviewed the range of schemes available to support concept development and feasibility studies, alongside the steps required for projects to evolve successfully. Emphasis was placed on the importance of international collaboration and strategic alignment as critical factors in unlocking further investment. External financing through partnerships, joint ventures, and development finance institutions was highlighted as a means to accelerate progress in the sector

Discussions Highlights

The sessions underscored the urgent need to strengthen infrastructure and technical capacity to support marine renewable energy projects and related initiatives requiring robust grid connectivity, marine structures, and skilled human resources. Participants emphasised that no new regulatory frameworks are necessary, as existing legislation already provides for the application and implementation of renewable energy projects. Instead, efforts should focus on streamlining permitting processes through the existing Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) frameworks, which already require maximum socio-economic, environmental, and technological information. Clarifying mandates across agencies was also highlighted as a means to reduce bureaucratic hurdles. Financing was identified as a critical enabler, with proposals to expand Blue Finance instruments, adopt innovative models such as Build–Operate–Transfer, and mobilize resources through public–private partnerships. Community inclusion emerged as essential for long-term success, with calls to involve coastal populations in decision-making and deliver tangible benefits through participatory governance and capacity-building programs. Finally, addressing data gaps was highlighted as a priority, with recommendations to establish frameworks for data sharing, conduct strategic surveys and impact assessments early in project planning using an ecosystem-based approach to ensure that mitigation measures are comprehensive and effective, and align research priorities with policy development to ensure informed and sustainable implementation.

Table 6: Key actionable priorities in the Marine Renewable Energy Sector.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Strengthening infrastructure (grid connectivity, marine structures) and building skilled human resources	Shortage of technical expertise; limited readiness of existing infrastructure	Prioritize readiness assessments; implement training and upskilling programs OES (Ocean Energy Systems) Ocean thermal energy Conversion (OTEC) via DOWA Facility	MEPU, MAIFSBEF, MESWMCC, CSMZAE, CEB, MARENA, EDB, BM, MCCI, Private Sectors	1. To carry out identification of sites at sea to support projects 2. To carry out pilot project (one model OES) which is adapted to MRU. 3. To set up the proper structure to support private sectors to implement projects
Establishing a dedicated framework for MRE; streamlining permitting processes	Bureaucratic hurdles; overlapping responsibilities; weak integration of ecological safeguards	Implement a single-window coordination mechanism under current legislation, utilizing the existing SEA and EIA provisions to integrate required impact studies, while clarifying institutional mandates and strengthening coordination among agencies.	CEB, MARENA, MEPU, MAIFSBEF	1. Establishment of one scheme for MRE. 2. To create a fast-track committee (with all the Ministries/entities concerned)
Development of Blue Finance instruments; adoption of BOT models; mobilization through PPPs	Limited access to finance; lack of accessible data; lengthy project initiation	Expand financing tools (seed funding, venture capital, PPPs); improve stakeholder coordination; enhance data accessibility	MOF, MAIFSBEF	1. Leverage existing generic PPP frameworks (such as the Public-Private Partnership Act and the Build Operate Transfer Act) to implement blue economy projects, ensuring that the specific characteristics of each project, particularly regarding infrastructure, innovation, and community impact that

				are carefully assessed on a case-by-case basis. 2. Set up a dedicated Blue Climate Fund to pool resources from government, donors, and private investors. 3. Develop a national framework for Blue Bonds to raise capital for large-scale ocean sustainability projects.
Comprehensive research on impacts and resource potential; regional collaboration for knowledge exchange	Data gaps; fragmented research efforts	Establish frameworks for data sharing; conduct strategic surveys and impact assessments early	MRIC, CSMZAE, MOI	1. To set up a mechanism for all MSR/ Scientific cruises within EEZ to furnish data to government. 2. To valorise the use of the Mauritius Ocean Observatory E-Platform to facilitate the collection, storage, organisation, and dissemination of spatio-temporal geospatial data relevant to ocean exploration including Scientific Cruises.

Theme 7: Green Ports, Maritime Transport and Trade

Ports and maritime transport are the backbone of global trade and the blue economy, serving as critical hubs for connectivity, commerce, and regional integration. However, their operations also contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and environmental degradation. The pre-consultative dialogues highlighted the urgent need to transition towards green ports and sustainable maritime transport systems, ensuring that trade and logistics are aligned with climate goals and ocean stewardship to deliver scalable, investable, and enforceable outcomes.

Stakeholders emphasised the importance of modernising port infrastructure to reduce carbon footprints, adopting cleaner technologies, and integrating renewable energy solutions into port operations. Discussions also underscored the role of digitalisation and smart logistics in improving efficiency, transparency, and competitiveness, while minimising environmental impacts.

At the same time, maritime transport and trade present opportunities for economic growth, regional cooperation, and job creation. Yet constraints such as outdated infrastructure, limited financing, regulatory gaps, and uneven adoption of international standards remain significant challenges. Addressing these requires coordinated action among governments, private sector actors, and regional organisations.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to advance green port development, sustainable maritime transport, and resilient trade systems. By fostering innovation, strengthening institutional frameworks, and mobilising investment, stakeholders can ensure that maritime trade contributes to both economic prosperity and environmental sustainability, in line with international commitments such as the International Maritime Organization's decarbonisation agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; SDG 14: Life Below Water).

Session 1: How to make Mauritius become the first Green Port in the Southern Hemisphere

Mauritius can position itself as the first Green Port in the Southern Hemisphere by embedding sustainability and efficiency into every aspect of port operation. This requires investment in greener technologies, improved governance, and enhanced container, bulk, and bunkering handling capacities while ensuring compliance with international environmental standards. By linking port activities to financial services such as ship registration and vessel financing, and by fostering public-private partnerships, Mauritius can attract foreign investment and technological expertise. Greening initiatives will not only enhance reputation and competitiveness but also consolidate Mauritius' role as a sustainable maritime hub at the crossroads of Asia and Africa.

Session 2: Creating an inclusive development of the Port

The workshop emphasized inclusivity, ensuring diverse representation across social and economic backgrounds, with over 130 participants contributing to the dialogue. Inclusive port development means engaging stakeholders from government, private sector, and civil society to co-create solutions that balance trade facilitation, environmental sustainability, and social equity. By

integrating fishing, ship repair, ancillary services, and workforce training, Mauritius can ensure that port modernization benefits a wide spectrum of society. Inclusivity also requires transparent land allocation, performance-based development, and governance reforms that empower local communities while maintaining sovereignty over strategic assets.

Session 3: Connectivity, Safety and Efficiency

Port Louis, handling 99% of Mauritius' external trade, faces urgent challenges in connectivity, safety, and efficiency. Current delays, outdated equipment, and low global rankings highlight the need for immediate interventions such as mobile crane rentals, workforce training, and medium-term investments in gantry cranes. Safety and resilience must be strengthened through improved governance, ICT integration, and better monitoring of pilotage, towage, bunkering, and waste disposal services. Enhancing efficiency will reduce freight costs, mitigate inflationary pressures, and safeguard Mauritius' competitiveness against regional rivals like Madagascar. A modernized, reliable port system is essential to ensure timely exports, imports, and strategic positioning in the Indian Ocean.

Session 4: Positioning Mauritius in Global Trade

Mauritius' strategic location at the crossroads of Asian and African sea routes offers immense potential to capture shifting global trade flows. With 80% of global trade carried by sea and the Indian Ocean's share of container trade doubling since the 1980s, Mauritius must act swiftly to consolidate its transhipment hub role. Global Maritime Trends 2050 highlight drivers such as technology adoption, climate agendas, geopolitical shifts, and regionalisation, all of which Mauritius must leverage. By strengthening logistics, embracing green principles, and tapping into Africa's growing population and consumer demand, Mauritius can attract volumes diverted from congested ports and position itself as a resilient, future-ready maritime hub.

Session 5: Financing and Innovation

Financing and innovation are critical to unlocking Mauritius' port potential in a context of fiscal constraints. Debt alone is unsustainable; instead, equity investment, optimized loans, and innovative funding structures must be pursued. Public-private partnerships can mobilize foreign direct investment, boost forex revenues. Governance reforms will be key to unlocking equity financing, driving visibility, and diversifying port activities. Innovative solutions such as IoT-enabled systems, digitalized logistics platforms, and performance-based land allocation will enhance efficiency and attract partners with technological capacity. By combining financial innovation with sustainability, Mauritius can transform its port into a catalyst for long-term economic growth.

Discussions Highlights

Discussions on maritime decarbonization, green port transformation, and clean fuel innovation emphasized the urgent need for collaborative, scalable solutions to reduce emissions in shipping

and port operations. The IMO outlined global targets for cutting greenhouse gases by 2030 and achieving net-zero by 2050, while the MPA presented a roadmap to position Port Louis as a model green port through renewable energy, clean fuel infrastructure, digitalization, and circular economy practices. Practical insights from APM Terminals highlighted the benefits of electrifying port equipment and smart energy management, and MOL showcased investments in clean methane, bio-LNG, and synthetic fuels. Financial instruments and partnerships were also discussed, with CareRatings stressing the role of carbon markets and green bonds, and HSBC presenting applications of blue finance in aquaculture and port decarbonization. Mauritius was encouraged to leverage its strategic location and trade agreements to become a regional maritime hub, expanding value-added services and investing in infrastructure, digitalization, and green technologies to strengthen trade, enhance efficiency, and support inclusive, sustainable growth.

Table 7: Key actionable priorities in the Port Development Area.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Strengthening port infrastructure (container, bulk, bunkering, dry docking) and building skilled human resources	Outdated equipment (only 3/8 cranes fully operational); shortage of technical expertise; limited readiness of existing infrastructure	Define "infrastructure strengthening" as improving equipment availability, operational efficiency, and maintenance systems Prioritize readiness assessments; rent mobile cranes; implement training and upskilling programs	PTOs, CHCL, MPA, MITD and Marine Training Schools, Private Sectors	1. Conduct rapid technical audit of port equipment. 2. Introduce performance-based equipment leasing contracts (pay-per-use cranes) as interim solution 3. Establish a rapid-response technical unit for equipment downtime 4. Implement targeted technical training (equipment handling, engineering) and launch exchange programs with high performing ports for on job skills transfer.
Establishing a dedicated governance framework for port operations; streamlining land allocation and permitting processes	Bureaucratic hurdles; overlapping responsibilities; weak transparency and ecological safeguards	Create a one-stop shop for permits; integrate SEA and impact studies; clarify mandates and strengthen inter-agency coordination	EDB	1. Strengthen existing governance by setting up an inter-agency coordination platform 2. Publish open-access port land registry and utilisation maps to improve transparency
Development of innovative financing instruments (equity, PPPs, asset valorisation, green finance)	Narrow public finance; limited access to equity; forex losses (~USD 250m	Expand financing tools (seed funding, venture capital, PPPs); improve stakeholder coordination; enhance data accessibility	MOF, EDB, PMO	1. Establish a Port Investment Platform bundling projects for investors. 2. Explore green bonds and blue finance instruments.

	annually); lengthy project initiation			3 Introduce foreign currency-denominated port tariffs for specific services to reduce forex leakage 4. Establish project preparation facility and develop bankable project pipelines with pre-feasibility studies funded upfront.
Involving communities and stakeholders in port development; delivering tangible benefits through jobs and ancillary services	Risk of reputational damage; social conflicts if communities excluded; weak trust between operators and local populations	Implement inclusive governance models; launch capacity-building programs; foster trust through participatory approaches	MPA, SME Mauritius, Statistics Mauritius, CHCL, Private Operators, MOYS, MGEFW, PMO	1. Identify and map key stakeholders (port workers, fishers, SMEs, residents) 2. Launch port-linked apprenticeship schemes targeting youth in coastal regions 3. Develop local supplier development programmes to integrate SMEs into port logistics chains
Comprehensive research on port performance, environmental impacts, and trade potential; regional collaboration for knowledge exchange	Data gaps; fragmented research efforts; insufficient early-stage risk assessments	Establish frameworks for data sharing; conduct strategic surveys and impact assessments early; align research priorities with policy and global maritime trends	MAIFSBEF, MESWMCC, PMO Universities; Statistics Mauritius; MRIC, MOFA, Diplomatic Corps.	1. Enhance national maritime data-sharing framework through the Observatoire de Environment 2. Define institutional responsibilities for research coordination 3. Commission periodic port performance and environmental studies 4. Establish joint research chairs funded by industry to link academia, regional partners in the Indian Ocean with port operations.

Strategic positioning and market integration	Lacks a clear regional hub strategy, poorly integrated into regional shipping networks and trade corridors, and suffers from the absence of long-term traffic forecasts and demand studies, limiting its competitiveness and evidence-based investment planning.	Digitalisation, green transition, and regional partnerships to strengthen competitiveness and resilience.	MPA, MITCI, MCCP, EDB, CHCL	1. Establish a trade intelligence unit to monitor cargo diversion opportunities (e.g. congestion in other regional ports).
Digitalisation and operational efficiency	Low levels of digital maturity; limited use of port community systems, real-time cargo tracking, and automated customs; fragmented IT systems increasing transaction costs and dwell times	Deploy a digital Port Community System, enhance operations with data analytics and automation, modernize customs through risk-based, paperless processes, and strengthen inter-agency coordination to boost efficiency and reliability.	MPA, MITCI, CHCL, MAIFSBEF	1. Complete implementation of Maritime Single Window (MSW) including Phase II 2. Integrate Vessel Clearance System (VCS) with other port services 3. Deploy AI-driven berth scheduling systems to reduce vessel waiting time 4. Implement real-time cargo tracking through the creation of a single digital port ID for all operators and users

Energy transition and resilience risks	High exposure to fossil fuel price volatility; lack of a coherent energy transition roadmap; insufficient climate-resilient infrastructure planning	Develop a green port roadmap with shore-to-ship power, alternative fuels, energy-efficient equipment, and climate-resilient design, positioning Mauritius as a regional green maritime hub to unlock concessional finance, carbon markets, and sustainability-linked investments.	MPA, MEPU, Private Sectors, MOF	1. Consolidate existing green initiatives into a structured roadmap; 2. Scale up renewable energy use in port operations 3. Introduce shore-to-ship power infrastructure. 4. Develop climate-proof infrastructure (rooftop solar on port warehouses) 6. Access green finance, carbon markets, and sustainability-linked funding.
Human capital and institutional capacity	Skills gaps in port management, logistics engineering, digital operations, and green shipping technologies; institutional capacity constraints in designing, procuring, and managing complex projects and PPPs	Establish a structured port skills development framework with international ports, academia, and private sector; complement governance reforms with performance contracts, KPIs, and accountability mechanisms	MPA, MEHR, HEC, Training Institutions, Universities, MTESR, Private Sectors	1. Establish partnerships with international port operators and academia 2. Design specialised training programmes (digital logistics, green shipping, engineering) 3. Introduce certification schemes. 4. Strengthen institutional capacity for PPP design and management.

Theme 8: Fisheries, Aquaculture and Food Security

Fisheries and aquaculture are central to food security, livelihoods, and economic resilience in coastal and island communities. They provide essential sources of protein, sustain millions of jobs, and contribute significantly to national economies. However, the pre-consultative dialogues underscored that these sectors face mounting pressures from overfishing, habitat degradation, climate change, and unsustainable practices, which threaten both ecological balance and long-term productivity.

Participants highlighted the dual role of fisheries and aquaculture: as vital contributors to nutrition and economic growth, and as sectors requiring urgent reform to ensure sustainability. Discussions emphasised the need to strengthen governance frameworks, improve monitoring and enforcement, and promote sustainable practices that balance productivity with conservation. At the same time, aquaculture was recognised as a growing opportunity to meet rising demand for seafood, provided that it is developed responsibly, with attention to environmental impacts, biosecurity, and equitable access to resources.

Food security emerged as a cross-cutting concern, linking fisheries and aquaculture to broader development priorities. Ensuring reliable access to safe and nutritious seafood requires not only sustainable resource management but also investment in value chains, infrastructure, and market systems that benefit local communities.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to secure the future of fisheries and aquaculture while safeguarding marine ecosystems and ensuring equitable access to food. By advancing sustainable practices, strengthening institutional capacity, and fostering innovation, stakeholders can ensure that these sectors continue to support nutrition, livelihoods, and resilience in the face of global change.

Session 1: Overview of the Fish Stocks in the Indian Ocean

Sustainable fisheries governance in the Indian Ocean requires stronger data systems, predictive science, and regional cooperation. The IOTC oversees 16 tuna species across 29 countries, with 2024 catches exceeding 2 million tonnes, yet persistent gaps in statistics, compliance, and surveillance undermine management. Tropical tunas make up over half the catch, with artisanal fleets contributing significantly, underscoring the need for inclusive data frameworks. SIOFA's deep-water fisheries remain largely data-limited, urging Mauritius to re-engage in science and governance, build high-value processing chains, and adopt ecosystem-based approaches for species such as Orange Roughy and Toothfish. Complementing these perspectives, INCOIS's experience in satellite-based advisory services and citizen-science apps demonstrated how they can enhance predictive capacity, with ongoing RandD expanding to deep-sea PFZ forecasts and mariculture planning. Cross-cutting challenges include weak regional coordination, limited stock assessments, and insufficient integration of climate variability into decisions. For Mauritius, strategic priorities lie in reinforcing participation in IOTC and SIOFA, establishing a national fisheries data observatory, investing in training on ocean modelling and stock assessment, and fostering innovation partnerships with INCOIS. By bridging tuna expertise, deep-sea management, and predictive technologies, Mauritius can position itself as a regional leader in science-based, climate-smart fisheries management.

Session 2: Climate Change and Fisheries

Climate change is already reshaping fisheries sustainability and ocean productivity in the Indian Ocean, with direct implications for Mauritius. Evidence from satellite data and the JRC's OPFish model showed a steady decline in productivity and contraction of skipjack tuna habitat, driven by ocean heat accumulation and weakened nutrient upwelling. Skipjack feeding zones have shrunk by 5–10% per decade, with marine heatwaves compressing distribution southward and directly constraining biomass capacity, underscoring the need for real-time monitoring and adaptive quota management under IOTC frameworks. The compound ecological and socioeconomic threats of climate change, from coral bleaching and acidification to food-web disruption, with artisanal fishers and coastal communities facing heightened vulnerability. The importance of climate-smart fisheries policies, early-warning systems, and resilient aquaculture species to safeguard food security were highlighted. Complementing these insights, the HYDROMET initiative and marine observation platforms showed the ability to deliver risk forecasting, noting that rising SSTs beyond biological thresholds are already causing up to 30% annual income losses in small-scale fisheries. The holistic approach of linking directly physical oceanography, such as impact-based forecasting of marine heatwaves, bleaching, and storm surges to community decision-making were advocated. Cross-cutting challenges include insufficient local data, weak integration of climate information into policy, financial barriers to early-warning infrastructure, and low engagement of artisanal fleets in digital tools. For Mauritius, strategic priorities lie in capitalising on the existing National Climate–Fisheries Observatory, embedding adaptation and risk management into fisheries policy, strengthening partnerships with EU's Joint Research Centre, HYDROMET, and INCOIS, and leveraging climate finance opportunities. By coupling scientific innovation with adaptive governance, Mauritius can position climate resilience as a defining pillar of its Blue Economy.

Session 3: Aquaculture

The session underscored that Mauritius' aquaculture sector is entering a decisive growth phase, blending industrial efficiency, community empowerment, and regenerative innovation. Highlights on the FMM's production of 1,851 tonnes of Mauritius Redfish, with 95% exported globally, demonstrated the strategic role of aquaculture in food security, with scaling to 6,000 tonnes by 2030 poised to double employment and enhance traceability despite challenges of feed costs, space, and logistics. At the community level, lagoon farming of native oysters and mangrove crabs illustrates how small-scale aquaculture can restore biodiversity and sustain livelihoods through farm-to-table models, though seed supply and post-harvest infrastructure remain constraints. Moreover, the AFRC's leadership in broodstock development, marine ranching, and freshwater aquaculture, supported by modernized governance under the Barachois Policy and Fisheries Act 2023, with a vision to integrate AI, digital tools, and feed innovation into a knowledge-driven industry. Complementing this, the MARC's regenerative mariculture initiatives, including Mauritius' first sea cucumber hatchery, coral aquaculture, and biochar production, which restore ecosystems, sequester carbon, and open pathways to blue carbon credits. Cross-cutting challenges, dependence on imported feed and seed, limited financing, weak industry–research coordination, and regulatory delays, highlight the need for a National Aquaculture Strategy linking industry, research, and finance. By prioritising feed self-sufficiency, digital farm management, and inclusive community-led models, Mauritius can position itself as a regional hub for sustainable

tropical aquaculture by 2030, making aquaculture a cornerstone of its Blue Economy and food-security agenda.

Session 4: Fishing Technologies and Equipment

The session highlighted that the future of sustainable fisheries in Mauritius depends on bridging industrial innovation with artisanal empowerment. One presentation demonstrated how a vertically integrated tuna operation has built traceability, transparency, and social responsibility into modern purse seining, showing it to be a low-emission, selective gear compatible with sustainability. International certifications, adoption of biodegradable FADs, and circular economy initiatives recycling nets and buoys illustrate how industrial fishing can lead in responsible innovation. Complementing this, another initiative showcased Smart FAD technology equipped with GPS, solar beacons, and echo-sounders to reduce FAD loss, improve monitoring, and enhance catch predictability, directly benefiting artisanal fishers through lower fuel costs and more reliable livelihoods. A third perspective underscored the challenges facing Mauritius' 2,468 registered fishers and nearly 1,900 boats, including declining productivity, financial exclusion, and limited policy representation, while advocating for stronger consultation platforms, targeted financing, and spatial zoning to balance artisanal fishing with other coastal uses. Cross-cutting issues, uneven access to technology, persistent marine debris, and gaps in financial and digital literacy, point to the need for inclusive governance. Strategically, Mauritius should institutionalise a National Fisheries Technology and Innovation Platform, incentivise adoption of Smart FADs and biodegradable materials, embed social standards and circular economy principles into certification, and ensure artisanal voices shape technological transitions. By aligning industrial efficiency with community resilience, Mauritius can build a fisheries sector that is both high-tech and human-centred.

Session 5: Value-addition in Seafood Processing

This Session illustrated the full spectrum of value creation in Mauritius' seafood sector, spanning regulatory assurance, industrial circularity, and grassroots innovation. The Competent Authority Seafood oversees inspection and certification of fish and aquaculture exports to EU and non-EU markets, ensuring compliance with international food-safety regulations while maintaining strong trading relations and aquatic-animal health status. However, gaps in diagnostic capacity and aquatic-veterinary oversight highlight the need for investment in laboratories and risk-analysis systems. At the industrial level, the tuna sector processes around 100,000 tonnes annually, generating Rs 15 billion in exports and 6,000 jobs, while pioneering a zero-waste, circular model that transforms by-products into fishmeal, omega-3 nutraceuticals, and biogas, cutting 40 tonnes of CO_2 per day. This transition positions Mauritius as a carbon-smart seafood hub aligned with global ESG benchmarks, though rising energy and logistics costs remain challenges. At the community scale, over 150 grassroots projects have advanced sustainable fisheries cooperatives, digitalisation of artisanal fisheries, women-led aquaculture, and plastic-to-biodegradable innovation, though technical capacity, licensing, and financing barriers persist. Cross-cutting issues include regulatory gaps, competitiveness pressures, and the need for harmonised standards across industrial, artisanal, and community levels. Strategically, Mauritius should establish a

Seafood Value-Chain Council linking regulators, processors, and communities, invest in aquatic-animal health infrastructure, replicate circular-economy models across blue-economy sectors, and expand inclusive financing for women and youth. By integrating certification, industrial symbiosis, and community empowerment, Mauritius can build a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable Blue Economy.

Session 6: Sustainability, Market Opportunities, Connectivity, Safety and Efficiency

This session underscored that market access for Mauritius' tuna sector now hinges as much on sustainability and diplomacy as on production volume. UK and EU markets increasingly demand full traceability and certification, with ecolabels such as MSC strongly influencing consumer choice and retailer procurement. Compliance now extends beyond environmental standards to include human-rights audits, waste reduction, carbon accounting, and vessel transparency, demonstrating that sustainability is inseparable from market access. At the geopolitical level, the South West Indian Ocean tuna value chain remains concentrated in Mauritius, Seychelles, and Madagascar, but faces mounting threats from EU tariff quotas, IOTC policy shifts, and TCAC allocation reforms that could constrain purse-seine capacity and inflate raw-material costs. Climate volatility, exemplified by the recent positive Indian Ocean Dipole phase, further compounds economic risks. Despite these pressures, Mauritius retains opportunities to expand semi-industrial and demersal fisheries, with underexploited banks offering scope for new vessels and albacore longlining presenting premium export potential. Realising this requires calibrated export authorisations, strict stock monitoring, digital traceability, and investment in fleet finance, cold-chain infrastructure, and skills training. Cross-cutting challenges include rising compliance costs, trade disadvantages, financing barriers, and climate-driven variability. Strategically, Mauritius must reinforce leadership in ethical and traceable tuna production, pursue regional diplomacy to defend quota and trade access, and embed climate risk into Blue Economy policy. By aligning compliance, trade strategy, and innovation, Mauritius can consolidate its position as a trusted and sustainable seafood supplier while safeguarding national interests in an increasingly competitive Indian Ocean arena.

Session 7: Surveillance and IUU Fishing Control

This session demonstrated that Mauritius' fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is advancing through technological innovation, legal reform, and regional cooperation. The Fisheries Monitoring Centre provides 24/7 vessel tracking via the Big Ocean Data system, integrating multiple satellite and communication platforms and supporting real-time coordination with the National Coast Guard and Fisheries Protection Service. Recent enforcement successes, including the interception of foreign vessels engaged in shark poaching, highlight its role as a cornerstone of deterrence and maritime domain awareness. At the regional level, the Western Indian Ocean's Maritime Security Architecture links national surveillance systems with coordination centres in Madagascar and Seychelles, enabling joint missions that have intercepted illegal flag use and narcotics trafficking. Mauritius contributes both surface and aerial assets to these operations, reinforcing interoperability and collective response to transnational threats. Nationally, the Fisheries Act 2023 modernised enforcement through vessel licensing, traceability,

and sanctions reform, while Port Louis continues to serve as a key transhipment hub with high compliance under IOTC and FAO Port State Measures. Cross-cutting challenges include limited financial and logistical capacity for extended offshore monitoring, human resource constraints, and the need for sustained training and technological investment. Strategically, Mauritius should operationalise its National Maritime Information Sharing Centre and Vessel Monitoring System, strengthen data-sharing agreements, expand aerial surveillance, and enhance legal deterrence through higher penalties and consistent prosecution. By linking national surveillance, regional cooperation, and modernised legal frameworks, Mauritius is consolidating its position as a trusted guardian of marine resources in the Western Indian Ocean.

Session 8: Research and Development

The highlight of this session was about how Mauritius can transition from a resource-based to a knowledge-driven Blue Economy through innovation, research, and regional partnerships. Waste-to-value energy initiatives are already converting tuna-processing effluents into renewable biogas, reducing industrial discharge, powering factory boilers, and supporting carbon credit markets, exemplifying industrial symbiosis within the seafood cluster. Fisheries mapping surveys across the EEZ have uncovered new species and identified rich demersal zones, underscoring the need for research-driven management plans that balance exploration with conservation. Marine-based fertilizer innovation is demonstrating how fish waste and seaweed can be transformed into biofertilizers, reducing reliance on synthetic inputs and linking agriculture with marine ecosystems. At the regional scale, the Indian Ocean Digital Atlas is being developed to integrate decades of oceanographic and fisheries data into interactive maps and decision-support tools, while large-scale seaweed aquaculture showcases the potential of marine biomass industries to absorb carbon, reduce methane emissions, and generate employment. The EU's €58 million Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Programme further reinforces Mauritius' engagement in regional governance, blue business, and ecosystem resilience, providing new funding pathways for RandD and SME innovation. Cross-cutting challenges include limited domestic funding, weak coordination between research and industry, absence of policy incentives for waste valorisation, and data accessibility gaps. Strategically, Mauritius should establish a National Ocean Innovation Platform, expand biotechnology and renewable energy clusters, leverage EU partnerships for capacity building, and position itself as a Blue Innovation Hub in the Western Indian Ocean. By advancing waste valorisation, marine research, digital infrastructure, and regional cooperation, Mauritius is laying the foundation for a resilient, carbon-neutral, and globally connected ocean economy.

Discussions Highlights

The different presentations and discussions highlighted how Mauritius is advancing its National Fisheries Strategy by positioning fisheries as a key pillar of its blue economy, contributing 1.5% to GDP and supporting around 20,000 livelihoods through artisanal, offshore, and tuna fishing. With fish exports comprising one-fifth of national trade, the government is prioritizing aquaculture development, aiming to scale production from 2,000 to over 20,000 tons. This is supported by initiatives such as training at the AFRC, designation of 29 fish farming zones, and reduced sea concession fees. Regionally, Mauritius plays a leading role in fisheries governance through active

participation in IOTC and SIOFA, including championing climate change as a permanent agenda item. Scientific innovation is encouraged, with satellite-based advisory systems and environmental indicators proposed to enhance fishing efficiency and sustainability. The private sector demonstrates leadership through circular economy practices and renewable energy integration. Governance and enforcement are strengthened via 24/7 vessel monitoring and regional maritime security cooperation.

Stakeholder discussions raised concerns about stock assessments, lack of enforcement of monitoring, control and surveillance, aquaculture impacts, ecological impact of industrial fishing practices (including pollution), bycatch, including juvenile, endangered and non-target species , and ornamental fish extraction from dive-sites, the need for baseline scientific research before planning new activities, notably deep-sea squid fisheries, due to potential impacts on key species such as sperm whales, with responses emphasizing data collection, inclusive governance, the application of the precautionary approach and ecosystem-based management.

Table 8: Key actionable priorities in Fisheries and Aquaculture Development.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Strengthening fisheries data systems (observatories, vessel monitoring, satellite integration)	Incomplete catch/effort statistics; weak stock assessments; reliance on external modelling; no resources to gather the data for fisheries landing	Establish national fisheries and climate observatories; invest in training for ocean modelling and stock assessment	Diplomatic Corps, MOFA, MAIFSBEF, MOT, Maritime Training Schools, Universities	1. Have a branch Integrated in the IOC Climate Regional Observatory to add system for fisheries 2. Recruit enumerators for data collection of Artisanal Fishers 3. Develop training programs and train officers on modelling 4. Carrying capacity of activities on fishing banks 5. Recruit experienced (e.g. fishers) to carry out surveillance at sea and during landing 6. Integrate recreational fisheries under MAIFSBEF, and collection of data and sharing
Expanding regenerative aquaculture (oysters, crabs, sea cucumbers, seaweed)	Dependence on imported feed and seed; limited hatchery capacity; post-harvest infrastructure gaps	Prioritise hatchery self-sufficiency; introduce feed rebates; expand lagoon aquaculture pilots with community participation	MAIFSBEF, EDB, CSMZAE, Diplomatic Corps, SME Mauritius, Fishermen Association, MISMEC, BOM	1. Review of Barachois Policy 2. Grant window to support these kind of aquaculture (Blue aquaculture fund) 3. Introduce a Scheme for Feed Rebate in the Budget 4. Prepare action Plan for Aquaculture modernisation and operation. 5. Establish a formalized MSP management plan that is publicly accessible with a clear framework that all stakeholders can use to guide projects both within and beyond the lagoon.

				6. Formalise a co-management framework to empower the local fishing community to move from passive participants to active partners in resource management. 7. Develop a Marine Biomass Framework
Deploying Smart FADs and digital tools for artisanal fleets	High FAD loss rates; uneven access to technology; low digital literacy among fishers	Provide incentives for digital tools and training for Smart FAD adoption; integrate artisanal fleets into digital frameworks	MAIFSBEF, FWF, Fishermen Associations, MITCI	1. Devise a training to empower fishers on digital devices and tools 2. Upgrade the RodMoFad App to include for information for fishers including data sharing (2-way traffic) 3. Review the technique for anchoring FADs using scientific modelling 4. Development of Scheme to purchase for and training of digital tools to include in budget
Enhancing enforcement and surveillance capacity (FMC) in connection to IUU Fishing	Human resource constraints; limited offshore monitoring; evolving transnational threats	Operationalise National Maritime Information Sharing Centre; expand aerial surveillance; strengthen data-sharing agreements with regional partners	NCG, MAIFSBEF, Diplomatic Corps, MOF, MOFA	1. Invest in Fisheries Patrol Boat and qualified crew to combat IUU fishing in the EEZ 2. Recruit more trained personnel to work with VMS and AIS
Scaling semi-industrial demersal fisheries	Infrastructure gaps in cold-chain and logistics; financing barriers for SMEs	Expand cold-chain infrastructure; provide fleet-finance grants; implement	MAIFSBEF, MMTA, PML, Marine Training Schools	1. Develop a Semi-Industrial Fishing Port with all required land infrastructure in Mauritius and/or outer islands 2. Processing Unit development

and fleet expansion		strict stock monitoring and digital traceability		3. Develop a technical training programme for semi-industrial fishers 4. Design training for semi-industrial crew -in scarcity areas 5. Create a Semi-Industrial fishers data base. 6. Continuous training of semi-industrial fishers. 7. Increase the number of semi-industrial fishing fleets
Developing circular seafood clusters (fishmeal, omega-3, biogas, recycling nets)	Rising energy/logistics costs; weak coordination between research and industry	Replicate circular economy models; incentivise industrial symbiosis; embed ESG standards into certification systems	CA, Private Sectors, EDB, MESWMCC, MOLG, MIBL	1. Develop a national collection system for centralise fish waste for post processing
Strengthening regional diplomacy and trade alliances (e.g. IOTC, SIOFA, EU SWIOP, IOC)	Tariff quota pressures; quota allocation reforms; climate-driven catch variability	Pursue coordinated diplomacy with Seychelles and Madagascar and EU; embed climate risk into trade strategy; leverage EU SWIOP funding	MOFA, Diplomatic Corps, MAIFSBEF, Private Sectors	1. Ministry Foreign Affairs to maintain engagement with relevant diplomatic representations 2. Further research and studies on impact of climate change on fisheries needed

Theme 9: Blue Diplomacy and Ocean Governance

Blue diplomacy and ocean governance are central to advancing collective action for the sustainable management of marine resources. The pre-consultative dialogues underscored that the ocean is a shared heritage that transcends national boundaries, requiring cooperation, dialogue, and coordinated governance frameworks to address challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, illegal fishing, and maritime security.

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of strengthening regional and international cooperation through diplomatic engagement, multilateral agreements, and cross-sectoral partnerships. Blue diplomacy was recognised as a powerful tool to align national priorities with global commitments, foster trust among states, and mobilise resources for sustainable ocean development. At the same time, effective ocean governance requires robust institutional frameworks, transparent decision-making processes, and inclusive participation that ensures the voices of all stakeholders, from governments to local communities, are represented.

Discussions also emphasised the need to harmonise governance mechanisms with international frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, while promoting regional leadership in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 14: Life Below Water.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to strengthen blue diplomacy and ocean governance, ensuring that dialogue translates into coordinated action, and that governance systems are resilient, inclusive, and adaptive to emerging challenges. By doing so, stakeholders can build a foundation for long-term cooperation, safeguard marine ecosystems, and secure the ocean's role as a driver of peace, prosperity, and sustainability.

Session 1: Blue Diplomacy and Regional Cooperation

The session focused on strengthening government delivery systems and advancing sustainable ocean development. Presenters shared international experiences, including examples of how strategic goals can be translated into effective policies and the role of technology and artificial intelligence in governance. Successful initiatives in marine spatial planning and public–private partnerships, particularly in seaweed farming, were also highlighted. The APIA Commonwealth Ocean Declaration, ratified by 56 nations, was presented as a key framework. It calls for action across five priority areas: conserving marine ecosystems, reducing pollution, advancing the sustainable blue economy, integrating ocean climate actions, and enabling access to blue finance. Speakers also described ongoing projects in technical assistance, maritime boundary support, coral and mangrove restoration, and efforts to address marine plastic pollution.

Attention was further directed toward practical support and financing. Several presenters offered to assist with strategy implementation by ensuring resource availability and leveraging technology. Mechanisms such as grants for capacity building, feasibility studies, and investment tools, including blue bonds, were discussed. One proposal suggested developing an integrated blue economy project and elevating ocean health as a priority issue in the national position paper for COP 30.

Session 2: International Maritime Law and Blue Economy Policy Integration

The presentations during the session collectively emphasized inclusive, equitable, and integrated approaches to the development of the blue economy for Mauritius. The need for an inclusive and equitable blue economy in Mauritius was mentioned, promoting a community-led governance model based on four principles: fairness, harm prevention, rights protection, and cultural continuity. This approach calls for a shift from consultation to co-design and co-decision-making, embedding Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and valuing local knowledge. A presentation from Seychelles showcased leadership through its Blue Carbon Policy and Fisheries Management Plan, aligning marine strategies with Paris Agreement NDCs, safeguarding mangroves and seagrass for carbon sequestration, and establishing MRV-based frameworks for monetizing ecosystem services. It was also highlighted that Mauritius is drafting a Blue Economy Bill based on legal mapping and gap analysis to integrate sectors like fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, ports, and emerging areas such as marine biotech and offshore renewables, ensuring alignment with UNCLOS, SOLAS, and regional standards. Finally, for Mauritius to translate global commitments into national law, recommendations highlighted that this would require applying precautionary, polluter-pays, and ecosystem-based management principles, while closing enforcement gaps (such as weak AIS compliance) through technology and inter-agency coordination to curb Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and trafficking.

Session 3: Diplomacy, Negotiation, and International Advocacy

The presentations highlighted that Mauritius could be strategically positioned in advancing ocean governance under the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, which entered into force in January 2026. This Agreement governs two-thirds of the ocean beyond national borders. As a member of AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) and the African Group, Mauritius can leverage its strong scientific capacity (ranking among the top 20 globally for marine scientists per capita) and its experience in community-driven marine conservation to influence key bodies such as compliance and scientific committees. The treaty introduces mechanisms for marine genetic resource benefit-sharing, marine protected areas (MPAs), environmental impact assessments, and capacity building, creating opportunities for Mauritius to champion equity, support less-resourced states, and lead in technology transfer and data clearing-house systems. Backed by initiatives like the High Ambition Coalition, the EU's €20M Technical Assistance Facility, and IUCN-led projects, Mauritius can strengthen blue diplomacy and develop a regenerative Blue Economy prioritizing nature-based solutions and ocean science. Lessons from Regional Fisheries Management Organizations highlight governance challenges, making Mauritius's role critical in preventing ocean grabbing and ensuring fair implementation. The session also highlighted decades of success through the Small Grants Program, through initiatives such as pioneering octopus fishery closures and community-led marine reserves in Rodrigues. As such, with the Agreement entering into force in January 2026, there is a need for Mauritius to develop a national vision and articulation of their role in the implementation of BBNJ. Mauritius is well-positioned to integrate scientific baselines, inclusive governance, and sustainable economic development under the BBNJ framework.

Discussions Highlights

The discussions on blue diplomacy and ocean governance highlighted the opportunities to strengthen regional expertise through training, research vessels, and catalyst organizations, while enhancing visibility in global forums and fostering collaboration via redesigned cooperation frameworks and digital dashboards. At the same time, challenges such as geopolitical power dynamics, limited representation in negotiations, inadequate funding for technical teams, fragmented data sharing, and weak transparency were identified as barriers to progress. The opportunities, challenges and recommendations are expanded below.

Table 9: Key actionable priorities in Blue Diplomacy and Ocean Governance.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Mauritius's leadership in AOSIS, African Group, IOC; strong marine science capacity; visibility in BBNJ implementation	Geopolitical power dynamics; limited representation in negotiations; limited visibility in global forums	Strengthen diplomatic presence in multilateral forums; leverage scientific expertise for influence	MOFA, MOF, PMO, Diplomatic Corps, MAIFSBEF, MESWMCC	1. Establish an ocean diplomacy unit in MOFA. 2. Train negotiators and create a pool of negotiators. 3. Increase participation in Regional and International Forums. 4. Establish a Just Transition Commission for right of nature in projects. 5. Set up the Inter-ministerial Committee to coordinate the Blue Economy Sectors with regional and international diplomatic sectors.
Blue bonds, grants, technical assistance facilities (EU, IUCN, GCF); blended finance models; private sector PPPs	Inadequate funding for technical teams; limited access to blue finance	Mobilize innovative finance; integrate ocean health into COP 30 national position	MOF, BOM, SEM, MAIFSBEF, MBA	1. Launch feasibility studies 2. Set up working group to issue blue bonds 3. Secure donor-backed grants for capacity building 4. Develop projects by and with Impact investors.
Comprehensive research on impacts and resource potential; regional	Data, skills and capacity gaps; fragmented research efforts	Establish frameworks for data sharing; conduct strategic surveys and impact assessments; align research priorities with policy;	MOFA, MAIFSBEF,	1. Launch training/upskilling programs 2. Establish regional training hubs. 3. Establish a National Blue

and international collaboration for knowledge exchange		build technical and diplomatic capacity Facilitate collaboration among universities, polytechnics, research institutes, and international partners, while strengthening Mauritius' positioning as a regional hub for ocean-related education and research.	HEC, MTESR, MRIC	Economy Academic and Research Network.
Community-led governance models	Limited community inclusion; weak Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) mechanisms	Institutionalize FPIC, co-design, and co-decision-making; embed local knowledge	MAIFSBEF	1. Scale up community-driven marine conservation. 2. Embed FPIC in Blue Economy Bill 3. Expand Small Grants Program

Theme 10: Blue Finance

Blue finance has emerged as a critical enabler for advancing sustainable ocean governance and unlocking the potential of the blue economy. The pre-consultative dialogues underscored that while oceans provide immense ecological, social, and economic value, their stewardship requires significant and sustained investment. Mobilising financial resources through innovative mechanisms is therefore essential to bridge funding gaps, support conservation, and drive inclusive development.

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of developing dedicated financial instruments and frameworks, such as blue bonds, blended finance, and public–private partnerships, to channel resources toward marine conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods. Discussions also emphasised the need to align financial flows with international commitments, including the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14: Life Below Water).

At the same time, constraints were identified, including limited institutional capacity, fragmented financing mechanisms, and challenges in ensuring transparency and accountability. Addressing these requires stronger governance structures, capacity-building, and regional cooperation to ensure that blue finance delivers measurable impact.

This theme therefore focuses on identifying pathways to mobilise, manage, and scale up financial resources for ocean sustainability. By fostering innovation in financing, strengthening institutional frameworks, and ensuring equitable access to resources, stakeholders can ensure that blue finance becomes a cornerstone of resilient, inclusive, and sustainable ocean development.

Session 1: Unlocking the Potential of Blue Finance

The Blue Economy was presented as a central pillar of the 2025–2026 strategic programme, with Blue Finance identified as a priority area. Emphasis was placed on the need to explore the full range of ocean resources, including offshore and deep-sea opportunities, while encouraging the banking and services sector to innovate through instruments such as blue bonds. The Economic Development Board (EDB) is actively collaborating with stakeholders to identify bankable projects and close financing gaps. Workshop themes focused on building a regulatory framework for blue bonds, developing a pipeline of viable projects, leveraging blue carbon to create new value chains, and positioning the International Financial Centre as a global hub for blue finance.

Presenters highlighted the transformative potential of blue finance for Mauritius, noting that while opportunities exist, challenges must be addressed. Strong institutions, reliable data, and sound governance are essential to attract private sector investment. Successful models from Singapore, Australia, and Mexico, such as biodiversity credits and parametric insurance, were shared as examples Mauritius could adapt. It was cautioned that inaction could result in missed opportunities for economic growth, marine conservation, and climate resilience, with even modest utilization of ocean resources capable of delivering substantial benefits.

Practical mechanisms to operationalize blue finance were also explored. Proposals included establishing independent trust funds for transparent fund management, following the Seychelles' SeyCATT model, and developing legal frameworks to support carbon trading. A micro-levy on imports and exports was suggested as a low-impact means of generating sustainable funding for ocean-related projects. The One Ocean Finance Facility was discussed as a global initiative Mauritius could engage with to align national priorities with international financing strategies and attract long-term investment.

Session 2: Regulatory and Policy Frameworks for Blue Finance in Mauritius

The panel discussion focused on the regulatory and policy frameworks for blue finance to unlock capital for the blue economy, emphasizing the need for financial innovation and regulatory reform to promote sustainable growth and resilience. Key themes included leveraging Mauritius's significant maritime area for economic growth. Panelists discussed the necessity of specific frameworks and standards for issuing blue and green bonds while noting that the high cost of issuance needs to be addressed, potentially through government support. The issuance costs and structuring complexity are major binding constraints for small and mid-sized issuers. On the international level, these key constraints are notably addressed through public underwriting support, anchor investments, or partial guarantees. In a view to reduce risk and facilitate market access for smaller issuers, similar mechanisms via financial support-giving body, development partners or a regional platform are usually mobilised. Sovereign-backed or semi-sovereign pilot issuance could act as a catalyst to crowd-in private issuers, establish market benchmarks and demonstrate viable issuance structures.

Success factors for blue finance systems were identified as having a clear taxonomy and framework, developing bankable projects with measurable objectives, establishing strong governance and disclosure for transparency, and utilizing credit enhancement providers to lower financing costs. Furthermore, the conversation highlighted the role of tokenization and digital platforms in attracting private capital by simplifying investment, reducing costs, and enabling instant settlement for sustainable assets like carbon credits. Overall, scaling up blue finance will require a cohesive strategy and coordinated action among regulators, financial institutions, capital markets, and government, alongside the development of a blue taxonomy, improved data systems, and institutional capacity. As regards to tokenization, this crypto-based instrument must be aligned within the existing financial regulation and investor protection frameworks. International experience shows that tokenization's success is when it is framed as a delivery mechanism for underlying real assets rather than substitute for traditional financing. A clear coordination among key national regulators for instance between the FSC, SEM and BoM is crucial. This includes compliance with securities laws and investor protection regulations and listing and secondary trading while providing transparency and liquidity.

Session 3: Financing Blue Projects: Market Readiness, Investor Appetite and Blended Finance Structures

The discussion focused on alternatives for financing new blue finance projects, recognizing the significant potential for Mauritius. It was noted that success in this market relies upon basic identification and prioritization of new projects (such as sustainable fisheries and offshore renewable energy) requiring stakeholders to define priorities and build a pipeline. Structured approach for effective early-stage project preparation is vital to support the bankability of projects and address key constraints such as high upfront costs, fragmented scale and lack of standardisation. This includes mobilising concessional funding for early-stage feasibility studies, bundling small and mid-sized blue projects into larger investable portfolios, designing common project templates aligned with blue taxonomy standards.

Issuers must structure their corporate blue instruments in line with high international standards (e.g ICMA guidelines for Blue Finance) to prevent blue washing and secure investor confidence that the bonds are truly sustainable. A key challenge is pricing, as issuers seek discounts while investors require financial viability, suggesting that government incentives such as tax exemptions on interest income may be necessary to bridge this expectation gap. The complexity and cost of external review frameworks tend to deter numerous small projects, therefore requiring an aggregation mechanism to pool different projects under one structure. Ultimately, a blue bond must tightly link to the national identity and imperatives of the blue economy rather than simply being sea-related. For projects aimed at the common good, such as building ocean resilience, blended finance involving philanthropic, multilateral, or government partners is crucial to absorb risk and responsibility. Listing on the stock exchange is encouraged, as over 90% of global sustainable bonds are listed, which provides issuers with visibility, access to growing climate-focused asset pools, and offers investors the comfort of regular reporting, scrutiny, and liquidity.

Session 4: Blue Carbon and Ocean-Based Climate Finance

The session centered on capitalizing on Mauritius's vast ocean jurisdiction, covering 2.2 million km^2, and its significant blue carbon ecosystems, including seagrasses and mangroves, to mobilize necessary climate finance by developing carbon credits from Mauritius' mangroves, seagrasses, and other Blue Carbon ecosystems. Monetization without robust MRV systems, tenure clarity, and benefit-sharing frameworks can undermine the credibility and the legitimacy of the Government. With a phased project approach starting with data, pilots and regulatory readiness is more prudent than early market deployment.

Experts stressed that realizing this potential requires a multi-faceted approach, starting with developing robust data and scientific valuation methodologies that account for co-benefits like fisheries and tourism, not just carbon sequestration. Essential enabling factors include establishing high-integrity governance frameworks, ensuring strong policy environments (such as integrating blue carbon into NDCs), and securing dedicated resources for monitoring and reporting. Innovative financing mechanisms proposed include various carbon credits, sovereign and corporate bonds, parametric insurance, and repurposing harmful subsidies. Successful implementation also depends on strong regional collaboration, capacity building supported by development partners, and fundamentally, integrating and ensuring benefits for coastal communities.

Discussions Highlights

The panel sessions covered regulatory and policy frameworks for blue finance in Mauritius, financing blue projects, market readiness, investor appetite and blended finance structures, as well as blue carbon and ocean-based finance. The discussions highlighted the need for stronger collaboration between financial and environmental stakeholders was emphasized, as bridging this gap would help build understanding and build capacity around financial tools while aligning conservation goals with strategic investment. Instruments such as debt-for-nature swaps were acknowledged as costly at the outset, but their expenses tend to decrease with experience and replication. Overall, the discussions encouraged Mauritius to position itself as a regional leader in sustainable ocean finance.

Table 11: Key actionable priorities in Blue Finance.

Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations	Key Stakeholders	Key Actions and Mechanisms
Tap the economic potential of the vast maritime zone	Structural, regulatory, and financial barriers Lack of data Identification/mapping of resources	Establish a clear vision/blueprint, and de-risking mechanisms to attract investment.	MOF, EDB, BOM, FSC, Private Sectors, MBA	1. Develop national Blue Economy Investment Blueprint taking into consideration priority sectors, create a pipeline for bankable projects and set up a committee.
Identify and quantify blue assets to attract blue finance.	Blue taxonomy to properly define activities not yet finalized.	Finalize blue taxonomy and develop a pipeline of bankable projects Introduce policy instruments that either tax negative environmental impacts or provide targeted subsidies to de-risk sustainable investments.	FSC, MOF, MAIFSBEF (Shipping)	1. Set up Blue Asset Registry (to develop marine mapping survey). 2. To carry out a feasibility study to develop trust funds relating to blue carbon and biodiversity funding for conservation. 3. Design fiscal instruments to incentivize sustainable investments. 4. Include sustainable blue activities into national green taxonomy
Encourage listing of blue instruments on Stock Exchange Mauritius to boost confidence and attract investments	Institutional framework blue finance lacking	Use fiscal incentives, finance guarantees, and blended finance structures to reduce risk and encourage issuer participation.	FSC, SEM, MOF, BOM, MBA	1. Create enabling regulatory framework. 2. Develop a blue Finance guideline 3. Introduce listing incentives. 4. Establish guarantee schemes for issuers.

Enhanced sector planning	Assessment of projects Lack of data (and issues of quality/reliability) Identification and quantification of blue assets	Implement global reporting standards to enhance transparency	Statistics Mauritius, MOF, FRC	1. Adopt global reporting standards (e.g., ISSB, EU taxonomy). 2. Build a national data-sharing platform.

Conclusion

The pre-consultative dialogues for Les Assises de l'Océan 2025 underscored the ocean's central role in driving sustainable development, resilience, and regional cooperation. Across ten themes, participants highlighted both opportunities and challenges, while putting forward actionable recommendations. Promoting ocean literacy and marine science education in schools was highlighted on several occasions to inspire youth take an interest in the vast opportunities to embark on a marine career

On marine renewable energy, the urgent need for infrastructure, financing, and community inclusion was emphasized to unlock innovation and sustainability. Blue finance emerged as a transformative enabler, with proposals for trust funds, blue bonds, carbon markets, and blended finance to mobilize investment. Discussions on blue diplomacy and ocean governance called for stronger regional capacity, enhanced representation in global forums, and the adoption of a comprehensive Ocean Governance Strategic Plan. Maritime decarbonization and green ports showcased pathways for clean fuels, electrification, and smart energy systems, positioning Mauritius as a model hub for sustainable shipping.

Themes on data, research, and innovation stressed the importance of filling knowledge gaps, sharing information regionally, and integrating advanced technologies such as AI and marine acoustics. Community inclusion was identified as essential for building trust, ensuring tangible benefits, and avoiding social conflict. Regulatory and legal frameworks were seen as critical to streamline permitting, integrate environmental safeguards, and ensure effective enforcement, and provide clarity for investors. Achieving long-term climate adaptation and economic sustainability requires prioritising the investment in integrated human capital, particularly the health, rights and full participation of women and youth. This further ensures that the demographic dividend is fully realised as a powerful driver of resilience and inclusive growth. Capacity building and education highlighted the need to train scientists, policymakers, and practitioners to strengthen ocean governance and diplomacy. Regional cooperation among Indian Ocean Island states was advanced as a cornerstone for safety, security, and shared development, supported by common databases and funding mechanisms. Finally, strategic initiatives such as horizon scanning, incubators, and the creation of a Blue Economy Hub were proposed to align national priorities with global frameworks and future opportunities.

Taken together, these dialogues reflect a collective ambition to move from fragmented efforts to integrated action. They call for Mauritius and its partners to embrace innovation, strengthen institutions, and lead in shaping a resilient and inclusive ocean economy. The outcomes provide a strong foundation for Les Assises de l'Océan 2025, ensuring that the national voice is amplified in global ocean governance while advancing sustainable growth and climate resilience. By adopting a systems approach, focusing on areas of comparative advantage, and embedding inclusivity at its core, Mauritius can shape a Blue Economy that is both economically viable and socially equitable, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Annex 1: Detailed Panels' Opportunities, Challenges and Recommendations

This section presents a more explicit and consolidated summary of the deliberations, highlighting the key opportunities identified for strengthening ocean stewardship, the constraints that pose challenges to progress, and the recommendations proposed to overcome these barriers. The summary is intended to capture the collective propositions of participants, reflecting the diversity of perspectives from government institutions, regional/international organisations, civil society, academia, private sector actors, and local communities.

Table 11: summary of opportunities, challenges and recommendations

Topics	Opportunities	Challenges	Recommendations
Theme 1: Climate Change, Biodiversity and Conservation			
Panel 1: Marine Ecosystems and Climate Change	➢ Expansion of the Great Blue Wall Initiative to strengthen regional collaboration and unlock climate and biodiversity funding opportunities. ➢ Promotion of blue carbon ecosystems (mangroves, seagrass, coral reefs) for carbon sequestration, coastal protection and sustainable livelihood. ➢ Increased focus on nature-based restoration projects (reef, seagrass, mangrove rehabilitation).	➢ Coral bleaching and ocean warming impacting ecosystem resilience. ➢ Fragmented data and weak inter-agency coordination. ➢ Complex and lengthy procedures in obtaining permits from the various Ministries/Institutions concerned, for ecosystems restoration, causing long delays in implementation ➢ Limited financial and technical resources for large-scale restoration. ➢ Local pressures from pollution, sedimentation,	➢ Scale up ecosystem restoration and blue carbon projects and streamline procedures in obtaining permits to advance ecosystems restoration ➢ Adopt ridge-to-reef and source-to-sea approaches to management, championing a whole seascape approach. ➢ Integrate blue carbon into national climate and financing frameworks. ➢ Develop Climate-Smart MPAs based on vulnerability mapping and climate adaptive management of existing MPAs and newly designated MPAs. ➢ Enhance data sharing and monitoring platforms. ➢ Encourage community-led conservation and regenerative blue economy initiatives.

	➢ Active community engagement and citizen science in conservation and restoration efforts. ➢ Develop a climate-smart MPA network that is ecologically representative, well-connected and developed through inclusive and participatory planning processes.	overuse and unsustainable coastal activities. ➢ Complex procedures in obtaining permits from the various Ministries/Institutions concerned, for ecosystems restoration, causing long delays in implementation ➢ Existing laws that are not applied	➢ Maximise the accreditation to international funds (Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund) and develop Public-Private Projects ➢ Develop a single Point of Contact /portal for permits procedures to ease and accelerate the process ➢ Organize the representation of Mauritius, Big Blue Ocean State on the international scene during events like COPs, UNOC, to increase visibility, attract fundings, partnerships, knowledge sharing. ➢ Assess the carrying capacity of marine ecosystems and species, regulate levels of use in line with that capacity, and conduct monitoring to track ecosystem and species status over time. ➢ Enhance science-policy interface to facilitate knowledge sharing on climate-smart planning and opportunities.
Panel 2: Regulatory and Policy Frameworks	➢ Modernized Fisheries Act (2023) aligning with global best practices. ➢ existing and operation GIS-based Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) platform hosted by CSMZAE with ongoing enhancement through data integration and accessible to stakeholders upon registration ➢ Recognition of Rights of Nature and inclusion of	➢ Weak enforcement and inter-agency coordination. ➢ Legal gaps in definitions of pollution, marine litter, and noise control. ➢ Bureaucratic hurdles and fragmented institutional mandates. ➢ Limited public awareness and compliance capacity.	➢ Formalize MSP governance mechanism, integrating climate resilience, BBNJ and marine biodiversity in alignment with existing legislation ➢ Develop clear legal definitions and enforcement protocols for pollution and marine activities. ➢ Establish a unified national strategy for marine biodiversity and ocean governance. ➢ Strengthen enforcement capacity and coordination across ministries. ➢ Promote stakeholder inclusion and public education campaigns. ➢ Introduce Just Transition mechanisms and explore Rights of Nature reforms.

	marine biodiversity in policy dialogues. ➢ Ongoing development of new marine wildlife protection regulations. ➢ Consideration of environment friendly/ fewer polluting alternatives.		➢ Ensure alignment on climate adaptation and mitigation strategies across NDCs, NAPs and NBSAPs. Minimise trade-offs while maximising co-benefits to deliver on the targets of the Paris Agreement and Global Biodiversity Framework and build resilience.
Panel 3: Coastal Resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction and Pollution	➢ Regional collaboration and others. ➢ Nature-based solutions like mangrove and coral restoration for coastal protection. ➢ Private sector engagement (Heritage Group) in sustainable tourism and waste reduction. ➢ Advance circular economy innovation through initiatives like the IslandPlas Project and waste collection/management initiatives. ➢ UNDP acknowledgement provides a pathway toward future GCF registration. ➢ Private sector engagement can be expanded to support broader coastal resilience efforts.	➢ Limited coverage of current plastic collection efforts. ➢ Coastal erosion due to hotels and developments built too close to the shore. ➢ Absence of long-term coastal monitoring frameworks to track erosion, flooding and eco-system change. ➢ Limited data and regulation on non-plastic pollution (noise, sedimentation). ➢ Mauritius is not yet formally registered with the Green Climate Fund. ➢ Access to international climate finance remains complex and administratively burdensome.	➢ Expand IslandPlas initiatives and similar projects to include full ocean waste management. ➢ Expand the scope of the current UNESCO Sandwatch to the IslandWatch programme within the framework of citizen science to address broader environmental challenges from the ridge-to-reef concept to inform national education and environmental policy frameworks. ➢ Implement comprehensive pollution monitoring (including noise, sediment, and turbidity). ➢ Scale up Island Watch as a national monitoring and early-warning tool. ➢ Combine engineered and nature-based solutions for coastal defense. ➢ Integrate risk mapping into all planning and development processes. ➢ Promote community-based coastal resilience and stewardship programmes. ➢ Advance formal GCF registration to improve access to climate finance.

			➢ Establish a Sustainable Levy to strengthen private sector community support.
Cross-Cutting Panels	➢ Blue economy growth potential through restoration and sustainable jobs. ➢ Inclusion of marine science and ocean climate literacy in schools. ➢ Innovation and technology integration for monitoring and enforcement. ➢ Promotion of PPP and community partnerships for marine conservation. ➢ Electrification reduces fuel costs, lagoon pollution, and operational emissions. ➢ Sustainable fishing transitions support biodiversity protection and ecosystem recovery	➢ Incomplete and fragmented data on marine ecosystems and fish stocks. ➢ Poor coordination among ministries and agencies. ➢ Financial and technical limitations for large-scale implementation. ➢ Weak legislative enforcement and overlapping mandates. ➢ High costs and limited charging infrastructure constrain adoption of electric engines. ➢ Destructive fishing practices continue to degrade fish stocks and coral ecosystems. ➢ Weak monitoring and enforcement undermine sustainable fisheries management.	➢ Establish a centralized but with all concerned ministries national marine data and coordination platform. ➢ Increase capacity-building and research funding. ➢ Introduce a Blue Tax or similar funding mechanism for marine conservation. ➢ Integrate climate resilience and marine protection into all development policies. ➢ Build multi-stakeholder partnerships including private sector and NGOs. ➢ Base national strategies on science-driven and community-informed decision-making. ➢ Implement decarbonisation strategies in tandem with biodiversity conservation and nature-positive solutions. ➢ Incentivize electric outboard adoption alongside solar-powered coastal charging infrastructure. ➢ Implement a full ban on *pêche à la senne* due to severe ecological impacts. ➢ Strengthen monitoring, control, and surveillance of artisanal fisheries.

Theme 2: Education and Marine Jobs			
Panel 1: Unlocking the Potential of Education and Marine Jobs in Mauritius	➢ Growing demand for marine professionals in mapping, conservation, and cruise-related employment. ➢ Increasing youth interest in oceanic careers with NGO and government collaboration. ➢ Potential for international partnerships and alignment with maritime standards. ➢ Expansion of public-private cooperation in maritime education.	➢ Fragmented institutional collaboration and lack of coordination among stakeholders. ➢ Limited awareness and unclear career pathways for youth. ➢ Insufficient integration of technical and legal disciplines. ➢ Weak link between training institutions and industry demand.	➢ Create a national coordination framework between education, industry, and government. ➢ Develop a comprehensive marine career roadmap. ➢ Promote joint academic–industry projects. ➢ Expand international certification and exchange programs. ➢ Compulsory student internships in the blue economy with NGO/or equivalent organisations
Panel 2: Skills and Training Needs in the Blue Economy	➢ Strong growth in vocational, technical, and scientific careers linked to blue economy sectors. ➢ NGO–school–community collaborations supporting experiential learning and ocean literacy. ➢ Recognition of TVET and micro-credentialing as flexible education pathways. ➢ Private sector engagement in training programs.	➢ Outdated curricula and lack of practical exposure. ➢ Funding and resource constraints for training infrastructure. ➢ Skills mismatch between graduates and job market needs. ➢ Limited recognition of informal and non-formal learning.	➢ Conduct Training Needs Analysis (TNA) regularly. ➢ Introduce micro-credentials and strengthen Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). ➢ Integrate work-based learning and mandatory internships. ➢ Enhance TVET programs with digital and environmental modules. ➢ Foster PPP models for training and equipment access.

Panel 3: Career Pathways and Opportunities in Oceanic Sectors	➢ Expanding opportunities in fisheries, renewable energy, biotechnology, robotics, and marine management. ➢ Regional collaboration for capacity-building and shared research. ➢ Entrepreneurship potential in aquaculture, marine technology, and bioplastics. ➢ Growth in interdisciplinary programs linking law, science, and economics.	➢ Limited funding for career development initiatives. ➢ Low public interest in marine careers. ➢ Cultural resistance to sectors like fishing. ➢ Weak enforcement capacity and limited sea-based monitoring.	➢ Reform curricula to include entrepreneurship, management, and sustainability. ➢ Create regional training hubs for cross-border skills exchange. ➢ Offer career guidance programs and scholarships. ➢ Introduce marine apprenticeship programs. ➢ Encourage women and youth participation through awareness campaigns.
Panel 4: Building Capacity in Shipping (MMTA)	➢ Recognized training aligned with STCW standards. ➢ Opportunity to become a regional maritime training hub. ➢ Expansion into short and officer-level courses. ➢ Partnerships for international recognition.	➢ Shortage of qualified trainers and equipment. ➢ Limited course variety and outdated facilities. ➢ Dependence on foreign expertise for specialized training.	➢ Upgrade training facilities with simulators and digital tools. ➢ Recruit qualified instructors through regional partnerships. ➢ Establish MOUs with global maritime academies. ➢ Offer advanced cadet and officer programs.
Panel 5: EU Support for Vocational Training and Capacity Building	➢ EU–Mauritius cooperation in sustainable blue economy and governance. ➢ Support for youth reskilling and maritime security initiatives.	➢ Bureaucratic constraints in implementing international agreements. ➢ Limited capacity to absorb foreign-funded programs. ➢ Lack of national coordination for project management.	➢ Strengthen EU–Mauritius partnerships under the Ocean Pact. ➢ Increase funding absorption capacity through trained project units. ➢ Promote joint research and student mobility programs.

	➢ Access to EU research funding and exchange platforms.		
Panel 6: Integrating Ocean Literacy in the National Curriculum (MIE)	➢ Potential to build long-term marine awareness from early education. ➢ Strong NGO and teacher engagement in informal programs. ➢ Opportunity to institutionalize ocean literacy and climate education. ➢ Build a shared ocean culture supporting blue economy careers	➢ Fragmented curriculum with minimal marine content. ➢ No compulsory ocean education at primary/secondary levels. ➢ Limited pedagogical tools and teacher training. ➢ Ocean literacy limited to schools; weak ocean culture in society	➢ Develop a National Ocean Literacy Strategy. ➢ Reform curricula at all levels to include marine content. ➢ Include MIE in blue economy policy frameworks. ➢ Build teacher capacity and pedagogical resources. ➢ Integrate climate education through the Climate Project. ➢ Create accessible, multi-generational public initiatives on blue economy professions ➢ introduce an additional scholarship award for students taking marine science at the HSC level Exam
Panel 7: Mapping the Blue Economy Workforce (MOI)	➢ Identification of workforce gaps and specialized fields (marine biotechnology, acoustics). ➢ Potential to establish a Faculty of Ocean Science. ➢ Opportunities for foreign partnerships and localized equipment production.	➢ Skills shortages across marine sectors. ➢ Dependence on expatriate expertise. ➢ Lack of coherent workforce strategy. ➢ Low interest in fishing professions.	➢ Develop a National Workforce Plan for the Blue Economy. ➢ Establish a Faculty of Ocean Science. ➢ Launch specialized training and research programs. ➢ Promote fishing as a viable career through targeted campaigns. ➢ Strengthen inter-agency and industry partnerships.
Panel 8: Marine Technical School (Kolektif Rivier Nwar)	➢ Model for inclusive and social blue economy training.	➢ Limited funding and government integration. ➢ Geographical limitation to one region.	➢ Scale up the Marine Technical School model nationally. ➢ Integrate the program into youth and employment policies. ➢ Secure sustainable funding through CSR and grants.

	➢ Empowers vulnerable youth through vocational pathways. ➢ Expands into electric boat engine training and international accreditation.	➢ Dependence on donor and CSR support.	➢ Promote public awareness campaigns.
Panel 9: Aligning with Government Strategy (Open University)	➢ Creation of interdisciplinary programs combining law, sustainability, and fisheries. ➢ Flexible distance learning model improving access. ➢ Supports regional cooperation and standardization.	➢ Limited enrollment due to niche focus. ➢ Funding and infrastructure constraints in higher education. ➢ Weak PPP support for student placements.	➢ Invest in higher education capacity-building for Blue Economy. ➢ Develop PPP frameworks for curriculum and internships. ➢ Enhance regional partnerships with IOC, ECOFISH, and universities. ➢ Standardize qualification recognition regionally.
Cross-Cutting Panels	➢ Potential to align training programs with industry needs via TNA and curriculum reform. ➢ Development of innovative blue economy sectors (aquaculture, marine biotechnology, ecotourism). ➢ Growing international interest in EU and UNESCO collaboration for capacity-building. ➢ Digitalization and automation opening new marine tech career fields.	➢ Certification gaps and lack of standardization. ➢ Financial and geographical barriers to participation. ➢ Foundation-level deficiencies in science and technology. ➢ Limited industry input in curriculum design.	➢ Strengthen curriculum alignment through advisory boards. ➢ Promote foreign institutional partnerships (EU, IOC-UNESCO, IMO). ➢ Build financial support mechanisms (grants, CSR, youth funding). ➢ Increase mobility and recognition across EA-SA-IO region. ➢ Support digital learning platforms and marine innovation incubators.

Theme 3: Sustainable Marine Tourism			
Panel 1: Tourism: A pillar for the Mauritian Economy	➢ The Blue Economy is the strategic core product and lifeblood of Mauritian tourism. ➢ Coastal assets (beaches, lagoons, coral reefs, marine life) attract over 60% of tourists. ➢ Tourism contributes 8.6% to GDP and Rs 93.6 billion in foreign exchange. ➢ Coastal tourism is a major employer within the USD 2.6 trillion ocean economy ➢ Potential for high-value emerging niches such as reef restoration tours, cruise tourism, and ocean-based wellness. ➢ Tourism market demand for unique experience	➢ Overreliance on coastal tourism and marine resources ➢ Sustainability imperatives due to pressure on ecosystems ➢ Limited innovation in product diversification ➢ Outdated carrying-capacity studies ➢ Gaps in data on non-hotel accommodations ➢ Licensing and compliance issues for marine tourism	➢ Diversify tourism offerings (eco-marine tourism, ocean wellness, sustainable adventure tourism) ➢ Strengthen collaboration between authorities for blue-economy monitoring ➢ Establish protected coastal and lagoon zones ➢ Encourage innovation across tourism subsectors ➢ Incentivize eco-marine and adventure tourism investments ➢ Promote cross-sector partnerships to diversify experiences ➢ Promote UCH for tourism and education ➢ Assess tourism carrying capacity at both island-wide and site-specific levels, manage the use accordingly. ➢ Implement monitoring systems to track environmental and social impacts over time. ➢ Measure and monitor informal tourism activities ➢ Enforce clear licensing for marine activities ➢ Promote sustainable beach protection using nature-based solutions.

	➢ Tourist arrival is on the rise post COVID in Mauritius, with high arrival number of 1,382,177 recorded in 2024.		➢ Consider an eco-contribution for Mauritius and/or for specific areas such as Saint Brandon (all visitors that are travelling to Saint Brandon have a contribution to pay that is exclusively redirected to Foundations and NGOs that have conservation programs in the area) ➢ Protect tourism coastlines through reinforced wave breaker systems. ➢ Transition tourism infrastructure to renewable energy and electrification. ➢ Support tourism operators in adopting electric transport solutions. ➢ Implement lagoon patrols to regulate boat activity and protect marine tourism assets. ➢ Engage tourism and private sectors in beach waste management and recycling. ➢ Require PET producers serving the tourism sector to support collection and recycling.
Panel 2: Eco-tourism standards and certification, Marine heritage protection and promotion	➢ The growing demand for eco-tourism presents an opportunity to generate sustainable tourism revenue while promoting marine conservation, awareness, and long-term protection of marine ecosystems ➢ Global marine eco-tourism is expanding	➢ Limited awareness ➢ Risk of "greenwashing" ➢ Need for enforcement and incentives ➢ Overuse and pollution threaten coastal ecosystems ➢ Insufficient funding for conservation and adaptation measures	➢ Strengthen National Ecotourism Policy ➢ Provide incentives for green investments ➢ Encourage ESG adoption; Expand certification for small operators ➢ Promote "Made in Moris" label and community integration ➢ Promote sustainable branding (Blue Flag, Mauritius Sustainable Tourism Label) ➢ Finance conservation through tourism ➢ Establish visitor fee mechanisms

	➢ Revenue from Tourism can be used for marine conservation	➢ Heavy reliance on guest donations. ➢ Limited citizen science participation ➢ Data reporting gaps	➢ Strengthen governance and capacity ➢ Promote reef-resilient tourism and private sector investment in adaptation ➢ Expand regional partnerships; Integrate marine education into schools ➢ Diversify funding sources ➢ Communicate impact transparently ➢ Replicate successful models in new regions
Panel 3: Tourism economic development, policy, governance and community engagement	➢ A strong science-driven framework to accompany the expansion of tourism in Mauritius	➢ Data gaps and need for capacity in surveying and documentation ➢ Biodiversity loss due to poaching, illegal fishing, and climate change ➢ Weak enforcement of laws	➢ Continue training and capacity building ➢ Strengthen collaboration with Hydrographic Services and Coast Guard ➢ Raise public awareness ➢ Ensure multi-stakeholder protection ➢ Ban harmful practices) and ensure the effective enforcement of existing prohibitions (swimming with whales, turtles). ➢ Manage aquarium fish catching sustainably ➢ Install mooring buoys ➢ Strengthen enforcement and collaboration between tourism stakeholders and fishers ➢ Promote education on marine conservation
Theme 4: Research, Development, ICT and Innovation			
Panel 1: Research & Development in the Blue Economy Sector	➢ Blue Economy R&D as a foundation for sustainable growth ➢ Exploratory fishing and underutilized zones (e.g., Agalega);	➢ Shortage of marine experts ➢ Fragmented collaboration ➢ Limited commercialization of research ➢ Ecological risks	➢ Create an Academy of Ocean Science and Faculty of Ocean Studies ➢ Promote training and capacity-building ➢ Start exploratory fishing using satellite data ➢ Develop Agalega as a fishing hub

	➢ Potential in hydrocarbons, renewable energy, biotechnology, and aquaculture ➢ Vast potential for polymetallic nodules, sulphides, and cobalt-rich crusts in the EEZ ➢ Economic and scientific opportunities ➢ Key areas: deep-sea minerals, marine pharmaceuticals, fisheries science, stock assessment, coral ecology, microplastics, coastal erosion, aquaculture biotechnology ➢ Streamlined permit system can attract researchers ➢ Shared research vessel boosts regional scientific collaboration ➢ Geographic area with high Blue Economy research potential	➢ Lack of trained workforce and supporting technology ➢ Limited coordination across projects and insufficient baseline data ➢ Lengthy scientific permit system ➢ High costs of research vessel acquisition and maintenance	➢ Commercialize R&D outcomes through partnerships ➢ Strengthen government-academia-industry collaboration ➢ Develop and enforce a Seabed Mineral Resources Bill ➢ Invest in training, research infrastructure, and scholarships for ocean science ➢ Create collaborative research platforms and ocean incubators ➢ Implement impact-management systems ➢ Encourage data-sharing and regional partnerships ➢ Simplify and trust-based science permit system ➢ Establish compulsory guidelines for responsible and ethical research activities ➢ Acquire or share research vessel regionally to reduce costs
Panel 2: Marine Biotechnology and commercialization and Legal Framework	➢ High-potential sector with applications in health, food security, and climate resilience	➢ Infrastructure, policy, and investment gaps ➢ Need for IP protection and regulatory alignment	➢ Develop a National Marine Biotech Strategy ➢ Strengthen technical capacity and monitoring; Promote PPPs ➢ Implement Nagoya Protocol

	➢ Emerging research on seaweed, sponges, and fish waste ➢ Marine biomaterials offer transformative potential in medicine, agriculture, and environment ➢ AI-driven design accelerates innovation ➢ Coral genomics, sponge bioprospecting, biosecurity, and marine waste valorization ➢ Circular economy applications	➢ Limited interdisciplinary collaboration ➢ High R&D costs ➢ Funding and infrastructure gaps ➢ Fragmented responsibilities	➢ Introduce traceability, eco-labeling, and export programs ➢ Create a marine biotech database ➢ Establish innovation financing tools and shared R&D infrastructure. Promote collaboration between science, engineering, and medicine ➢ Leverage seaweed, algae, and fish waste ➢ Adopt AI-driven material design; Invest in nano-agriculture ➢ Foster public-private partnerships and academic entrepreneurship ➢ Encourage science diplomacy ➢ Invest in MOI advanced lab equipment ➢ Build scientific capacity ➢ Establish a marine bio-bank ➢ Foster international scientific partnerships ➢ Develop a technology-transfer framework ➢ Support marine waste valorization and biobased product innovation
Panel 3: ICT and Innovation in the Blue Economy Sector	➢ Ocean Intelligence (AI, data, digital twins) can transform governance, resilience, and economic growth ➢ Enables policy evidence and regional SIDS collaboration ➢ MRIC schemes support innovation	➢ Data fragmentation ➢ Weak data-sharing culture ➢ Limited investment in digital infrastructure ➢ Limited academia-industry integration ➢ Infrastructure for blue biotech still developing ➢ Limited real-time data during extreme events;	➢ Build digital twins for scenario planning ➢ Integrate diverse datasets ➢ Apply AI for forecasting and resource protection; Develop shared data platforms ➢ Promote regional cooperation among SIDS and invest in digital infrastructure ➢ Strengthen academia-industry collaboration ➢ Invest in blue biotech infrastructure (photobioreactors, drug discovery platforms) ➢ Encourage regional partnerships; Establish incubator programs

	➢ Advanced forecasting systems (WAVEWATCH-III, WRF) ➢ Tools like PFZ and SARAT improve catch efficiency ➢ Acoustic technologies enhance coastal monitoring, erosion modeling, and renewable-energy planning ➢ Machine learning improves modeling accuracy ➢ Independent councils and open-source dashboards can connect policymakers, scientists, and investors ➢ PPP models to share risk	Need for localized forecasting ➢ Lack of centralized data system ➢ Limited collaboration ➢ Limited access to finance, markets, and technology ➢ Fragmented governance ➢ Shortage of qualified marine scientists and technical personnel	➢ Promote sustainable innovation via targeted funding ➢ Refine cyclone forecasting ➢ Develop climate and water-quality systems ➢ Establish region-specific sea-level advisories ➢ Expand data coverage ➢ Integrate satellite data ➢ Strengthen coastal warning SOPs and capacity-building ➢ Establish a national bathymetric and acoustic database ➢ Integrate AI and ML for prediction ➢ Strengthen data sovereignty and cross-sector collaboration ➢ Establish an independent Blue Economy Council ➢ Create connected data platforms ➢ Introduce seed funding, venture capital, and carbon-credit schemes ➢ Align frameworks with SDGs and UN targets ➢ Protect IP and promote open collaboration ➢ Offer scholarships, training programs, and science-policy fellowships ➢ Integrate ocean literacy into education ➢ Develop mentorship and internship schemes
Theme 5: Youth, Gender and Social Awareness			

Panel 1: Blue Generation: Education, Innovation, and Blue Careers	➢ Integrate marine studies into school curricula ➢ Promote STEM education with a focus on ocean engineering and sustainable aquaculture ➢ Partnerships with international universities and eco-clubs in schools can foster early interest	➢ Lack of integration of marine studies into school curricula ➢ Access gaps to training resources ➢ Limited engagement of hotels/resorts in student internships ➢ Gender equality hindered by inadequate facilities and mindset	➢ Awareness platforms, grants, and multilingual resources ➢ Modern technology-driven tools like VR headsets and online platforms to bridge access gaps and enhance training ➢ Involve hotels/resorts in hosting study camps and internships ➢ Ensure facilities and mindset support before implementing gender quotas
Panel 2: Gender Equality and Leadership in the Marine Sector	➢ Promote women's entrepreneurship and participation	➢ Women face significant barriers in the fishing sector due to cultural norms, physical demands, and lack of incentives ➢ Offshore fishing is considered socially inappropriate ➢ Jobs are perceived as underpaid ➢ Transparency issues in licensing and bureaucratic hurdles further discourage participation ➢ Current involvement is mostly limited to processing roles	➢ Financial incentives, gender quotas, cooperatives, and targeted training programs to promote women's entrepreneurship and participation

Panel 3: The Grassroots and the Coast: Social Awareness and Community Engagement	➢ Youth involvement in policy-making through internships, ambassador programs, and councils ➢ Incubators for project funding and technical assistance will empower young entrepreneurs ➢ Capacity-building initiatives under Blue Economy frameworks can create long-term opportunities ➢ Collaboration between government, private sector, and NGOs ➢ Networking platforms and project-writing support can enhance capacity building ➢ Synergy among stakeholders will accelerate progress toward sustainable marine development ➢ Strengthen cultural ties through field trips, museums for fishermen, and apps for sharing traditional practices	➢ Limited youth representation in policy-making processes ➢ Lack of coordination among stakeholders ➢ Low awareness on sustainable practices and climate change impacts on marine ecosystems	➢ Create internships, ambassador programs, and youth councils ➢ Establish incubators and capacity-building programs under Blue Economy frameworks ➢ Strengthen collaboration between government, private sector, and NGOs ➢ Strengthen networking platforms and provide project-writing support ➢ Raising awareness through social media campaigns, journalist training, and community engagement ➢ Legal reforms and enforcement of regulations to support sustainable practices

Theme 6: Marine Renewable Energy			
Panel 1: Unlocking the Potential of Marine Renewable Energy in Mauritius	➢ Abundant marine energy potential (wave, tidal, offshore wind, OTEC). ➢ Strategic positioning of Mauritius as a regional leader in blue energy. ➢ Public–private collaboration opportunities. ➢ Potential for job creation and innovation hubs.	➢ High upfront costs of technology and infrastructure. ➢ Regulatory hurdles and fragmented institutional coordination. ➢ Limited grid readiness and technical capacity. ➢ Stakeholder misalignment and trust deficit. ➢ Limited autonomy of electric engines (~7 hours) may restrict operations. ➢ Need for strategic placement and design of solar pontoons/jetties. ➢ Encouraging private boat operators to adopt electric engines. ➢	➢ Accelerate pilot MRE projects. ➢ Develop and implement offshore energy roadmap and leveraging prior studies, with designated marine energy zones for wind and other renewable energy. ➢ Introduce incentives (feed-in tariffs, green bonds). ➢ Upgrade grid infrastructure for offshore integration. ➢ Promote regional cooperation and data-sharing frameworks. ➢ Establish innovation hubs and encourage public-private partnerships. ➢ Coast Guard and Tourism Authority should be the initiating authorities for lagoon initiatives. ➢ Use electric engines for in-lagoon Coast Guard boats (typical autonomy ~7 hours). ➢ Design solar pontoons and jetties at specific locations to recharge batteries and power Coast Guard stations. ➢ Provide incentives for pleasure craft operators to switch to electric engines. ➢ Create marinas to monitor marine traffic, limit pollution spread, and enable remediation
Panel 2: Resource Mapping, Technical	➢ Strong offshore wind and wave energy	➢ Lack of updated ecological and marine data.	➢ Conduct comprehensive resource mapping and early-stage environmental studies.

Feasibility, Technology and Environmental and Social Impacts	potential (especially south and southeast). ➢ Marine Spatial Planning as a tool for sustainable site selection. ➢ New Environment Act 2024 offering structured EIA/SEA framework. ➢ Access to global best practices and data (e.g., Indian Ocean Energy Atlas). ➢ Exposure may foster better conservation practices and support preservation efforts	➢ Environmental risks – underwater noise, habitat disruption, cyclone impacts. ➢ Overlapping jurisdictions in approvals. ➢ Limited local technical and monitoring expertise.	➢ Integrate SEA and EIA processes into all marine projects. ➢ Establish centralized data-sharing platforms. ➢ Avoid sensitive ecological and tourism zones. ➢ Strengthen inter-agency coordination. ➢ Use of MSP data layers into decision-making. ➢ Allow **controlled, limited access** to sensitive areas for educational and conservation purposes.
Panel 3: Financing and Investment Mechanisms	➢ Growing international interest in blue and green finance. ➢ Availability of concessional finance and PPP models. ➢ Potential for BOT and blended finance schemes. ➢ MRIC's role in funding research and pilot innovation. ➢ Opportunity to attract private sector investment and foreign expertise.	➢ Early-stage financing gaps and high perceived risks. ➢ Limited private sector engagement in marine energy. ➢ Lack of financial instruments tailored for MRE. ➢ Absence of investor confidence due to unclear regulatory certainty.	➢ Develop national "Blue Finance" framework. ➢ Establish de-risking mechanisms and blended finance options. ➢ Create Ocean Technology Incubator for innovation and testing. ➢ Strengthen international partnerships (donors, DFIs, private firms). ➢ Introduce transparent, investor-friendly policy frameworks. ➢ Streamline licensing and permitting processes.

Cross-cutting issues	➢ Potential for local employment, training, and technical innovation. ➢ Readiness to expand physical and grid infrastructure. ➢ Existing institutions (CEB, MRIC, MARENA) capable of driving initiatives. ➢ Momentum to establish a dedicated MRE regulatory framework. ➢ Potential for "one-stop shop" licensing system. ➢ Growing inter-ministerial awareness. ➢ Scope for PPPs and BOT models. ➢ Access to innovative blue finance mechanisms. ➢ International development partners' interest. ➢ Community engagement for social acceptance. ➢ Potential for coastal community development and co-benefits. ➢ Knowledge-sharing between local users and developers.	➢ Insufficient technical expertise and human resource capacity. ➢ Limited physical infrastructure (grid, marine structures). ➢ Slow readiness assessment of existing systems. ➢ Overlapping mandates, lengthy approval processes. ➢ Lack of harmonized SEA/EIA integration. ➢ Inconsistent compliance and enforcement capacity. ➢ Limited financial resources and risk appetite locally. ➢ Absence of clear incentives for private investment. ➢ Project delays due to financing uncertainty. ➢ Risk of social resistance if communities excluded. ➢ Limited awareness of MRE benefits.	➢ Conduct readiness assessments of infrastructure. ➢ Implement training and upskilling programs. ➢ Strengthen grid and port infrastructure for MRE integration. ➢ Develop public–private collaboration for technical capacity building. ➢ Develop unified MRE legal framework. ➢ Establish one-stop shop for permits and clear timelines. ➢ Integrate SEA and impact studies into permitting. ➢ Strengthen coordination between agencies (MARENA, MOE, CEB). ➢ Create Blue Finance instruments (bonds, sustainability-linked loans). ➢ Adopt BOT and PPP models. ➢ Offer fiscal incentives and risk-sharing mechanisms. ➢ Promote regional investment dialogues. ➢ Establish inclusive consultation mechanisms. ➢ Implement capacity-building and awareness programs. ➢ Ensure tangible community benefits and co-management models. ➢ Conduct regular ocean surveys and impact assessments. ➢ Promote regional institutional collaboration for data-sharing. ➢ Link scientific research with policy formulation.

	➢ Strong potential for regional data collaboration. ➢ Opportunity for early-stage policy support based on scientific research. ➢ Access to external datasets (INCOIS, MRIC, MSP).	➢ Possible livelihood disruptions (fishing, tourism). ➢ Lack of accessible, up-to-date marine and ecological data. ➢ Duplication of efforts due to fragmented research. ➢ Weak data-sharing frameworks.	
Theme 7: Green Port, Maritime Transport and Trade			
Panel 1: Maritime Decarbonization and Clean Fuel Innovation	➢ Strong international momentum under IMO's regulatory framework for emission reduction. ➢ Development of alternative fuels such as bio-LNG, e-methane, and synthetic fuels. ➢ Regional collaboration opportunities in decarbonization projects and technology transfer.	➢ High capital investment required for clean fuel infrastructure. ➢ Limited local expertise and capacity for handling new fuels. ➢ Technological uncertainty and evolving global standards.	➢ Develop a national maritime decarbonization roadmap aligned with IMO targets. ➢ Encourage public–private partnerships (PPPs) for alternative fuel R&D and pilot projects. ➢ Strengthen regional cooperation for knowledge and technology exchange. ➢ Adopt green shipping and biodiversity measures in ports and vessels, aligning decarbonization with marine conservation goals under the 2030 MBOH roadmap
Panel 2: Green Port Transformation and Smart Infrastructure	➢ MPA's roadmap to make Port Louis a model green port. ➢ Potential to enhance efficiency through	➢ High implementation costs for electrification and automation. ➢ Need for upgraded infrastructure and reliable renewable energy supply.	➢ Integrate renewable energy (solar, wind) into port operations. ➢ Electrify port equipment and vehicles. ➢ Adopt digital twin technologies for predictive maintenance and efficiency.

	electrification and digitalization. ➢ Circular economy practices and smart energy management systems reducing operational costs.	➢ Resistance to technological change or limited skilled workforce.	➢ Invest in upskilling port workers for smart port management.
Panel 3: Green and Blue Finance for Sustainable Port Development	➢ Access to innovative finance instruments (green bonds, blue finance, sustainability-linked loans). ➢ Opportunities for climate-aligned investment partnerships. ➢ Growing investor interest in low-carbon and resilient port infrastructure.	➢ Limited institutional capacity to structure and manage green financial instruments. ➢ Lack of clear performance indicators and data transparency. ➢ Difficulty in accessing international carbon markets.	➢ Develop a national green finance framework for port and maritime projects. ➢ Build capacity in carbon accounting and ESG monitoring. ➢ Promote public–private partnerships to attract blended finance. ➢ Use measurable KPIs to ensure accountability and investor confidence.
Panel 4: Regional Trade Integration and Sustainable Maritime Growth	➢ Strategic geographic location of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean for transshipment and logistics. ➢ Trade agreements (AfCFTA, CECPA) expanding market access. ➢ Expansion opportunities in seafood processing, cold chain logistics, and value-added services.	➢ Competitive pressures from regional ports. ➢ High infrastructure costs and limited scale. ➢ Potential conflict between environmental goals and rapid trade expansion.	➢ Align port development plans with sustainability and trade integration goals. ➢ Promote regional logistics hubs and joint investment ventures. ➢ Expand cold chain and seafood value addition sustainably. ➢ Enhance regional transport connectivity and green corridors.
Theme 8: Fisheries, Aquaculture and Food Security			

Cross-cutting issues	➢ Positioning fisheries as a key pillar of the blue economy ➢ Contributing 1.5% to GDP and supporting around 20,000 livelihoods through artisanal, offshore, and tuna fishing ➢ Fish exports comprising one-fifth of national trade ➢ Government prioritizing sustainable aquaculture development ➢ Aim to scale production from 2,000 to over 20,000 tons ➢ Designation of 29 fish farming zones reviewed by MSP ➢ Reduced sea concession fees ➢ Training initiatives at the Albion Centre to enhance workforce skills and support aquaculture expansion ➢ Mauritius plays a leading role in fisheries governance through IOTC and SIOFA	➢ Dependence on limited fish stocks and global market fluctuations ➢ Potential aquaculture impacts on environment and ecosystems ➢ Concerns over bycatch, including juveniles and endangered species ➢ Concerns about ornamental fish extraction from dive-sites ➢ Limited specialized training and technical expertise across subsectors ➢ Coordination challenges and compliance with regional fisheries management measures ➢ Limited integration of scientific data into policy and practice ➢ Limited scaling of sustainable private-sector models ➢ Concerns about new fisheries activities without environmental impact assessment (squid fishing)	➢ Advance National Fisheries Strategy implementation ➢ Continue positioning fisheries as a key driver within the blue economy ➢ Continue aquaculture expansion through training and incentives ➢ Strengthen ecosystem-based management and monitoring of aquaculture zones ➢ Enhance data collection and impact assessments ➢ Expand training programs ➢ Introduce specialized modules in sustainable aquaculture, stock assessment, and fisheries technology ➢ Strengthen regional cooperation through IOTC and SIOFA engagement ➢ Maintain climate change as a key agenda item ➢ Promote joint monitoring and enforcement programs ➢ Encourage scientific innovation and digital transformation in fisheries ➢ Integrate environmental indicators into management decisions ➢ Support private sector innovation in renewable energy ➢ Implement measures to minimise bycatch and establish mandatory bycatch reporting mechanisms

	➢ Championing climate change as a permanent agenda item ➢ Adoption of satellite-based advisory systems and environmental indicators to enhance fishing efficiency and sustainability ➢ Private sector leadership through circular economy practices and renewable energy integration.		
Theme 9: Blue Diplomacy and Ocean Governance			
Panel 1: Blue Diplomacy and Regional Cooperation	➢ Strategic translation of goals into effective ocean policies. ➢ Leveraging AI and digital tools for governance. ➢ Public-private partnerships for seaweed farming and marine spatial planning. ➢ Access to blue finance (grants, blue bonds) to support projects. ➢ Implementation of APIA Commonwealth Ocean Declaration goals.	➢ Weak follow-up on policy implementation. ➢ Limited technical and human capacity in government agencies. ➢ Fragmented data sharing and transparency issues. ➢ Geopolitical power plays limiting influence in international forums. ➢ Lack of specialized personnel for negotiations and policy implementation. ➢ Insufficient technical funding and capacity.	➢ Develop integrated blue economy projects, anchored by a flagship initiative to enhance international visibility and credibility include ocean health in national positions for COP for UNFCCC, CMA for Paris Agreement ➢ Ensure resource availability and leverage technology for governance. ➢ Utilize grants, feasibility studies, and blue bonds for capacity building and project execution. ➢ Establish a regional expert pool and training programs. ➢ Create a regional research vessel and data-sharing platform. ➢ Launch regional programs to promote food security, resilience, and sustainable development.

	➢ Commonwealth Blue Charter Program ➢ Pool of experts (scientists, legal practitioners, policy makers) to strengthen governance. ➢ Creation of a regional research vessel for collaborative studies. ➢ Establish a regional catalyst organization for food security and resilience. ➢ Collaborative marine research and data collection across countries. ➢ Strengthen collaboration between Mauritius, Réunion, Madagascar, Seychelles, and Comoros. ➢ Shared objectives in safety, security, research, and development. ➢ Pooling regional ocean funding and shared databases. ➢ Promote scientific-based policy decision-making. ➢ Develop a comprehensive Ocean Governance	➢ Knowledge and educational gaps in ocean governance. ➢ Fragmented regional coordination. ➢ Varied institutional capacity and priorities across countries. ➢ Lack of centralized data management for regional ocean governance. ➢ Fragmented inter-agency coordination. ➢ Weak alignment of national and regional priorities. ➢ Insufficient financial and human resources for strategic initiatives. ➢ Politicisation of Blue Economy policy, leading to discontinuity and shifting priorities with changes in government	➢ Develop common regional objectives and shared funding mechanisms. ➢ Promote the existing Nation Ocean Observatory E-Platform. ➢ Enhance capacity-building at regional level. ➢ Foster aligned policy frameworks across participating countries. ➢ Formulate Ocean Governance Strategic Plan and align ministries, agencies, and regional bodies. ➢ Establish Blue Finance Hub to mobilize resources. ➢ Use the MSP framework to improve inter-agency coordination, stakeholder engagement and spatial planning of marine activities and policy implementation. ➢ Join the Blue NDC Challenge and strengthen engagement with the UNFCCC Ocean Climate Dialogue as an opportunity for knowledge sharing and technical capacity support. ➢ Anchor Blue Economy diplomacy as national goal, in law through an independent national framework, insulated from political change

	Strategic Plan (short, medium, long term). ➢ Reform regional partnerships with IOC, IORA, SADC, AU, COMESA. ➢ Create a Blue Finance Hub. ➢ Implement horizon scanning for future ocean opportunities.		
Panel 2: International Maritime Law and Blue Economy Policy Integration	➢ Strengthen Mauritius' visibility in international ocean affairs. ➢ Foster transnational relationships and regional voice in global forums. ➢ Expertise exchange between countries and organizations.	➢ Low representation in international decision-making forums. ➢ Fragmented international cooperation frameworks. ➢ Inefficient information flow between communities and governance bodies.	➢ Redesign cooperation frameworks for better collaboration. ➢ Use communication tools such as virtual dashboards. ➢ Promote expertise exchange and strengthen regional partnerships.
Panel 3: Diplomacy, Negotiation, and International Advocacy	➢ Shift from policy followers to policy influencers. ➢ Structured project implementation can improve regional impact. ➢ Opportunities to strengthen capacity for negotiations and technical support.	➢ Geopolitical pressures and competition. ➢ Limited funding and personnel for technical teams. ➢ Fragmented data sharing and knowledge gaps. ➢ Inadequate transparency in decision-making.	➢ Strengthen structured project implementation and monitoring. ➢ Enhance transparency and knowledge sharing. ➢ Build negotiation and technical capacity within agencies.

Theme 10: Blue Finance			
Panel 1: Regulatory and Policy Frameworks for Blue Finance in Mauritius	➢ Transformative potential of blue finance for Mauritius ➢ Even modest utilization of ocean resources could yield substantial benefits ➢ Mobilize private sector capital (banks, resorts, real estate, malls) to de-risk public blue investments while accelerating renewable energy uptake	➢ Inaction could result in missed opportunities for economic growth, marine conservation, and climate resilience ➢ High-profit, high-energy-consuming sectors remain insufficiently incentivized or required to contribute to blue and renewable ➢ finance	➢ Encourage banking and services sector to innovate through instruments like blue bonds ➢ EDB to collaborate with stakeholders to identify bankable projects and close financing gaps ➢ Mandate blue finance contributions or renewable energy scaling for high-energy private sectors to de-risk public investment
Panel 2: Financing Blue Projects: Market Readiness, Investor Appetite and Blended Finance Structures	➢ Opportunities to position Mauritius as a regional leader in sustainable ocean finance ➢ Potential to position the International Financial Centre as a global hub for blue finance. ➢ Investor appetite for blended finance structures	➢ Blue finance requires strong institutions, reliable data, and sound governance to attract private sector investment ➢ Market readiness and policy gaps for blue finance instruments	➢ Build a regulatory framework for blue bonds ➢ Establish independent trust funds for transparent fund management (similar to SeyCATT). ➢ Develop legal frameworks to support carbon trading ➢ Develop and implement regulatory and policy frameworks ➢ Facilitate market engagement through public-private partnerships and investor dialogues

Panel 3: Blue Carbon & Ocean-Based Climate Finance	➢ Potential to leverage blue carbon to create new value chains ➢ Learn from successful models in Singapore, Australia, and Mexico (biodiversity credits, parametric insurance) ➢ Opportunity to create sustainable funding streams for ocean-related projects ➢ Stronger collaboration between financial and environmental stakeholders can align conservation goals with strategic investment ➢ Potential to position the International Financial Centre as a global hub for blue finance. ➢ Investor appetite for blended finance structures.	➢ High initial costs for instruments like debt-for-nature swaps ➢ Limited local mechanisms to generate ongoing funding ➢ Limited understanding and capacity around financial tools. ➢ Market readiness and policy gaps for blue finance instruments.	➢ Adapt successful international models ➢ Use blended finance structures to mitigate initial costs ➢ Promote One Ocean Finance Facility engagement to align national priorities with global financing strategies ➢ Introduce micro-levy on imports and exports as a low-impact way to generate sustainable funding ➢ Foster collaboration and joint capacity building between financial and environmental sectors ➢ Promote knowledge-sharing platforms and training initiatives ➢ Develop and implement regulatory and policy frameworks. ➢ Facilitate market engagement through public-private partnerships and investor dialogues.

Annex 2: Pre-Consultative Dialogues Agenda

Theme 1: Climate Change, Biodiversity and Conservation

08h30 – 09h00 — **Registration of participants**

09h00 – 09h30 — **Opening Speeches**

1. **Welcome Address:** Dr S. Ramah, Ag. Head Blue Economy Unit
2. **Speech:** Hon. Fabrice David, Junior Minister, Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries
3. **Keynote Address:** Dr the Hon. Arvin Boolell, Minister, Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries

09h30 -10h00 — **Tea / coffee Break**

10h00 – 11h30 — **Marine Ecosystems and climate change (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**

Moderator: Bernardo Nasciemento (Odysseo Foundation)

Speakers:

1. IUCN Great Blue Wall – **Melany Poorun-Sooprayen (IUCN)**
2. Biodiversity and Climate Resilience in Mauritius: UNDP's Work Towards a Sustainable Future - **Olivier Pasnin (UNDP)**
3. Beyond Bleaching: Assessing Climate Change Risk to Mauritius' Coral Ecosystem – **Jay Doorga (UdM)**
4. Blue Carbon Projects and Iniin the IORA – **Mat Vanderklift (IORA Blue Carbon Hub)**
5. Seagrass Rehabilitation – **Lisa Ah Shee Tee (Reef Conservation)**

11h30 – 12h00 — **Break-Out Session**

12h00 – 13h00 — **Lunch**

13h00 – 14h00 — **Regulatory & Policy Frameworks for the protection and conservation of marine ecosystems and biodiversity in Mauritius (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**

Moderator: Tirouvi Kaully (Blue Economy Unit)

Speakers:

1. Mammal's protection and regulations – **Svetlana Barteneva-Vitry (MMCO)**
2. Protection framework for MPAs and Ecosystem Restoration – **Sebastien Sauvage (EcoSud)**
3. New Fisheries Act 2023: Insight on protection and conservation of marine biodiversity – **Nabiihah Roomaldawo (AFRC)**
4. Marine Spatial Planning Framework **– Arshad Rawat (Dept of CSMZAE)**
5. Ocean conservancy, Risks and Opportunities - **Murali Krishna Appandi (#Savetheblu)**

14h00 – 14h30	**Break-Out Session**
14h30 – 15h00	**Tea/Coffee Break**
15h00 – 16h00	**Coastal Resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction and Marine Pollution (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Melany Poorun-Sooprayen (IUCN)** **Speakers:** 1. The St Brandon Conservation Project – **Bernardo Nasciemento (Odysseo Foundation)** 2. Risk Mapping and vulnerability Assessment - **Christian Berretta, (UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa)** 3. IslandPlas Project – **Melany Poorun-Sooprayen (IUCN)** 4. Coastal Protection and climate resilient infrastructure – **Flavio Joseph (ER Group)**
16h00 – 16h30	**Break-Out Session**
16h30 – 17h00	**Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 2: Education and Marine Jobs

08h30 – 09h00	**Registration of participants**
09h00 – 09h15	**Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)** **1. Mr. Praveen Makool, MMTA** **2. Mrs. Darshini Geemul, Acropolis Training Institution** **3. Capt. S. Coopen, Shipping Division**
09h15 – 09h45	**Unlocking the Potential of Education & Marine Jobs in Mauritius (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Capt. S. Coopen (Shipping Division)** **Speakers:** **1.** Ocean Literacy to Ocean Careers: Empowering the Next Generation of Blue Leaders – **Darshini Gemul (Acropolis Training Institution)** **2.** Navigating Marine Careers Through a Legal Lens: Opportunities Beyond the Horizon – **D. K. Bedaysee (Shipping Division)** **3.** Building capacity in the shipping sector – **Marday Armoogum Moorghen (MMTA)**
09h45 – 10h30	**Break-Out Sessions**
10h30 – 11h00	**Tea / Coffee Break**
11h00 – 11h45	**Skills and Training Needs in the Blue Economy Sector (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Darshini Geemul (Acropolis Training Institution)** **Speakers:** **1.** Integrating Ocean Literacy into National Education Curricula – **Shakeel Atchia (MIE)**

2. Creating the required educational platform in Blue Economy for higher education – **Nabeelah Bibi Sadeer / Tarkeshwarsingh Beeharry (Higher Education Commission)**
3. Charting the Course: EU Support for Vocational Training and Capacity-Building in Marine Sectors – **Jasmine Aumeer (EU)**
4. Education, Marine Jobs & Ocean Literacy – **Edwin Mwashinga (UNESCO) - Virtual**

11h45 – 12h30 **Break-Out Sessions**

12h30 – 13h30 **Lunch**

13h30 – 14h15 **Career Pathways and Opportunities in the Marine Sector (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**
Moderator: Praveen Makool (MMTA)

Speakers:
1. Mapping the Blue Economy Workforce: Current Gaps and Future Needs – **Dr Mitrasen Bhikajee**
2. Vocational and Technical Pathways for Coastal Communities **– Vashil Jasgray (Kolektif Rivier Nwar)**
3. Aligning with Government Strategy: BA (Hons.) Law, Blue Economy and Sustainable Fisheries Management – **Desire Gael Henriette Bolli (Open University)**

14h15 – 15h00 **Break-Out Sessions**

15h00 – 15h30 **Tea / Coffee Break**

15h30 – 16h00 **Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 3: Sustainable Marine Tourism

08h30 – 09h00 **Registration of participants**

09h00 – 09h15 **Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)**
1. **Jocelyn Kwok, CEO of AHRIM**
2. **Philippe Espitalier-Noel CEO of ER Group**

09h15 – 10h00 **Tourism: A pillar for the Mauritian Economy (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**
Moderator: Sophie Desvaux de Marigny (ER Group)

Speakers:
4. Tourism: direct and indirect contributor to the national GDP and employment – **Ashwin Seetaram (Ministry of Tourism)**
5. Sustainable Tourism in Support of the Blue Economy – **Dr Charlotte de Fontaubert (World Bank)**
6. Sustainable Marine Tourism a new approach for hotels – **Jocelyn Kwok (AHRIM)**

10h00 – 10h30 **Break-Out Sessions**

10h30 – 11h00	**Tea / Coffee Break**
11h00 – 12h00	**Eco-tourism standards and certification, Marine heritage protection and promotion (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Jocelyn Kwok (AHRIM)** **Speakers:** **5.** Eco-Tourism: A New Trend for the Sustainable Tourism in Mauritius – **Louis Sylvain Meyepa (Tourism Authority)** **6.** Supporting conservation efforts and promoting local cultures – **Nina Svensson Dubois (Green Attitude)** **7.** The Mauritius Underwater Cultural Heritage Project: highlighting the legacy and potential of shipwrecks - **Shameela Mamode (CSMZAE)**
12h00 – 12h30	**Break-Out Sessions**
12h30 – 13h30	**Lunch**
13h30 – 14h30	**Tourism economic development, policy, governance and community engagement (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Dr Drishti Ramdenee (MCCI)** **Speakers:** **4.** Aligning tourism policy with climate resilience, biodiversity and protection – **Hughes Vitry (MSDA)** 5. Empowering Coastal Communities through Tourism – **Sophie Desvaux de Marigny (ER Group)** 6. Tourism-specific services/products – **Dr R. Harikumar (INCOIS)**
14h30 – 15h00	**Break-Out Sessions**
15h00 – 15h30	**Tea / Coffee Break**
15h30 – 16h00	**Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 4: Research, Development, ICT and Innovation

08h30 – 09h00	**Registration of participants**
09h00 – 09h15	**Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)** **1. Mr. Javed Iqbal Mosaheb, Acting Director (MOI)** **2. Mrs. Nandini Gooly Gopalla, Acting Officer-in-Charge (MIBL)** **3. Dr. Poonam Ramjeawon (MRIC)**
09h15 – 10h00	**Research & Development in the Blue Economy Sector (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Dr. Manvendra Singh (MOI)** **Speakers:** **7.** Strategic R&D Priorities for Mauritius' Blue Economy – **Dr. Mitrasen Bhikajee**

8. Non-Living Marine Resources Exploration in the EEZ of Mauritius – Focus on deep sea minerals **– Dr. Dass Bissessur (CSMZAE)**
9. Ocean Intelligence: Data-Driven Research for Blue Economy Transformation – **Associate Professor Dr. Maleika Heenaye-Mamode Khan (UoM)**
10. Bridging Marine Science, Technology, and Policy in the Blue Economy Sector – **Dr. Christine Erbe (Curtin University)**

10h00 – 10h30 **Break-Out Sessions**

10h30 – 11h00 **Tea / Coffee Break**

11h00 – 12h00 **Marine Biotechnology and commercialisation and Legal Framework (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**
Moderator: Dr. Devina Lobine (MIBL)

Speakers:
8. Marine Biotechnology and Bioeconomy Innovation – **Dr. Nowsheen Goonoo (MIBL)**
9. Marine-Derived Biomaterials for Health Innovation: Unlocking the Potential of Ocean Resources – **Professor (Dr.) Archana Bhaw-Luximon (CBBR)**
10. Marine Biotechnology Development and Research – **Mr. Kamlesh Ramdhony (MOI)**

12h00 – 12h30 **Break-Out Sessions**

12h30 – 13h30 **Lunch**

13h30 – 14h30 **ICT and Innovation in the Blue Economy Sector (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**
Moderator: Dr. Christine Erbe (Curtin University)

Speakers:
7. Innovation funding, biotech, and applied research – **Dr. Poonam Ramjeawon (MRIC)**
8. Applied Research, Exploration and Development in the Marine Sector– **Dr R. Harikumar (INCOIS)**
9. Acoustic Research in Mauritius – **Mr. Nissar Sumodhee (OceanVolts)**

14h30 – 15h00 **Break-Out Sessions**

15h00 – 15h30 **Tea / Coffee Break**

15h30 – 16h00 **Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 5: Exploring the Ocean: Youth, Gender and Social Awareness (PART I)

08h30 – 09h00 — **Registration of Participants**

09h00 – 09h30 — **Opening Remarks**

- Karuna Rana, President Big Ocean States Initiative (BOSI)
- Bernardo Naciemento, Foundation Manager, Odysseo Foundation
- Dr Sundy Ramah, Ag Head Blue Economy Unit, Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, and Shipping

The Big Ocean Ritual

09h30 – 10h30 — **Setting the Stage: Firestarter Panels**

Young Waves: Youth, Innovation & the Ocean

Moderator: Karuna Rana, BOSI
Panelists:

1. Azhar Joomun, National Youth Council
2. Anusha Seechurn, MCB
3. (ECOP Representative), Sov Lanatir
4. Jessan Persand, Persand Royal Company Ltd.
5. Prashant Mohesh, National Geographic Young Explorer

Women of the Tide: Gender, Community & the Ocean

Moderator: Pamela Bapoo-Dundoo, UNDP
Panelists:

1. Nazma Mollee, Member of the Fisherfolk Community
2. Veronique Garrioch, IBL Seafood
3. (Representative), Mauritius Tourism Authority
4. (Representative), Department of Biosciences & Ocean Studies, University of Mauritius
5. Jenna Ramoo, Défi Vert, Le Défi Media Group

10h30 – 11h00 — **Tea / Coffee Break**

11h00 – 12h30 — **Interactive Breakout/Working Groups**

Facilitated discussions to generate concrete and innovative recommendations across three working groups. The goal is to move beyond dialogue and develop 3–5 actionable recommendations or proposals per working group. Examples may include a training initiative, a funding mechanism, a policy reform, a partnership platform, etc.

Recommendations would also identify the specific role of key stakeholders, especially the government, in enabling, supporting, and scaling these proposals.

Working Group 1 — **Blue Generation: Education, Innovation, and Blue Careers**

This working group focuses on empowering the next generation as ocean stewards, scientists, innovators, practitioners, and leaders in the blue economy, acknowledging the importance of youth leadership for a sustainable future of our ocean. It will examine ways to strengthen ocean literacy across schools and universities, support youth-led initiatives and citizen science, and create pathways into marine research, entrepreneurship, and sustainable ocean careers. The group will also identify how Mauritius can build a skilled, inspired, and inclusive workforce to drive the blue economy forward.

- What skills and training will the future blue economy workforce require, and how can education systems respond?
- How can schools, universities, and vocational training centers embed ocean literacy and hands-on learning for youth?
- What programs, mentorships, or networks can encourage young people to become active custodians of the ocean?
- How can youth-led initiatives in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship be supported, scaled, and connected to policy or industry?
- How can technology and new educational tools make marine science and innovation more accessible and inclusive?

Working Group 2

Gender Equality and Leadership in the Marine Sector

This working group examines the representation, participation, and leadership of women and gender-diverse groups in marine education, research, and employment. It focuses on creating inclusive pathways, equal opportunities, and equitable benefits in marine sectors, especially those that are traditionally male-dominated.

- What barriers prevent women and marginalized groups from entering or advancing in marine science, fisheries, and blue economy jobs?
- How can education, training programs, and the private sector promote gender equality in marine careers?
- Are there role models or success stories that can inspire greater participation?
- How can policy, training, and financing mechanisms be more inclusive?

Working Group 3

The Grassroots and the Coast: Social Awareness and Community Engagement

This working group focuses on building public awareness of the ocean's role in society and climate resilience. It emphasizes community-based programs, outreach campaigns, and the role of local communities, including youth, in sustainable marine practices.

- How can communities be educated about the social, economic, and environmental importance of oceans?

- How can awareness campaigns, media, and community initiatives strengthen ocean stewardship? What strategies work best for raising awareness among different age groups?
- How can local knowledge and lived experiences be integrated into marine conservation efforts?
- What role do schools, NGOs, the private sector, and local leaders play in shaping public perception?
- How can local communities, especially young people, be empowered to influence marine policy and community practices?

12h30 – 13h30 **Lunch**

13h30 – 14h30 **Wrap Up: Rapporteurs share outcomes from the 3 working groups**

14h30 – 15h00 **Tea / Coffee Break**

15h00 – 17h00 **Odysseo Visit and Discussions**

Theme 5: Exploring the Ocean: Youth, Gender and Social Awareness (PART II)

08h45 – 09h15 **Registration of Participants for Respective Activities**

09h15 – 09h45 **Closing Remarks**

- H.E. Mr Oskar Benedikt, **Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius and to the Republic of Seychelles**
- Hon. Gilles Fabrice David, Junior Minister, **Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries**
- Dr the Hon Arvin BOOLELL, GOSK, **Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries**

The Big Ocean Ritual (Closing)

09h45 – 10h30 **Ocean Mindfulness and Ocean Connection Session**
Lead: Meghna Raghoobar

10h30 – 12h30 **Activity 1: Blue SALT Scuba Diving Initiation**
Lead: Ocean Spirit Scuba Diving Mauritius
(Hon. Gilles Fabrice David, H.E. Mr Oskar Benedikt + 8 participants)

Activity 2: Free Diving Initiation
Lead: Black Mermaid Foundation
(8 participants)

Activity 3: Snorkeling Initiation and Basic Swimming Skills
Lead: Yan Snorkeling School
(15 participants)

Activity 4: Dialogue with the Fisherfolk Community (and Sand-Sculpting Activity – TBC) (Batch 2)
Lead: Association des Pêcheurs et Enfants des pêcheurs de Bel Ombre (10 participants)

12h30 – 13h30 **Lunch**

END

Theme 6: Marine Renewable Energy

08h30 – 09h00 **Registration of participants**

09h00 – 09h15 **Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)**
1. **Mr C. Pugo (CEB)**
2. **Dr Khalil Elahee, Chairperson (MARENA)**

09h15 – 10h00 **Unlocking the Potential of Marine Renewable Energy in Mauritius (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**
Moderator: Tirouvi Kaully (Blue Economy Unit)

Speakers:
11. Policy direction and strategic planning for Marine Renewable Energy – **Dr Khalil Elahee, Chairperson (MARENA)**
12. Marine Energy for Island Power: CEB's Role in a Greener Grid – **Mr C. Pugo (CEB)**
13. Charting Mauritius' Blue Energy Future: Policy, Innovation, and Infrastructure for Marine Renewables – **Mrs N.V. Seebrun Sobhun (Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities)**

10h00 – 10h30 **Break-Out Sessions**

10h30 – 11h00 **Tea / Coffee Break**

11h00 – 12h00 **Resource Mapping, Technical Feasibility Technology & Environmental & Social Impacts (10mins per Speaker + Questions)**
Moderator: Mr Ashkwin Budloo (MARENA)

Speakers:
11. Marine Spatial Planning role in implementation of Marine Renewable Energy Projects – **Ms Yuneeda Oozeeraully (Department of Continental Shelf)**
12. Overview of global trends in Marine Renewable Energy –Overview of global trends in Marine Renewable Energy - **Dr Harikumar (INCOIS)**
13. Balancing Energy and Ecology: EIA as a Tool for Marine Spatial Planning and Biodiversity Protection – **Mr Dinkar Sharma Chamilall (Ministry of Environment)**

12h00 – 12h30 **Break-Out Sessions**

12h30 – 13h30	**Lunch**
13h30 – 14h30	**Financing & Investment Mechanisms (10mins per Speaker + Questions)** **Moderator: Dr R. Harikumar (INCOIS)** **Speakers:** 10. Catalyzing Blue Energy Innovation: MRIC's Role in Funding Marine Renewable Technologies – **Dr Poonam Veer-Ramjeawon (MRIC)** 11. From Feasibility to Finance: De-risking Marine Energy Projects for Investor Confidence – **Deujen Mungur (EDB)** 12. Mobilizing Blue Capital: Financing Marine Renewable Energy for Island Resilience – **Mark Leybourne (World Bank)**
14h30 – 15h00	**Break-Out Sessions**
15h00 – 15h30	**Tea / Coffee Break**
15h30 – 16h00	**Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 7: Green Port, Maritime Transport and Trade

08h30 – 09h00	**Registration of participants**
09h00 – 09h15	**Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)** **1. Aruna Bunwaree-Ramsaha, Ag. Director General (MPA)** **2. Veronique Garrioch (IBL)** **3. Mr Mehul Bhatt (Representative of the Private Sector Working Committee on Port and Maritime Transport)**
09h15 – 10h30	**Session 1: How to make Mauritius become the first Green Port in the Southern Hemisphere** **Facilitator: Drishty Ramdenee (Secretary General, MCCI)** **Presentations:** 1.1 Outline **– Dr. Drishtysingh Ramdenee, Secretary General, MCCI** 1.2 IMO Targets 2030/2050: **Mrs Sohatee-Taulloo (Shipping Division)** 1.3 Video on Energy Efficiency of Port Equipment: **James Newman, Hyster.** 1.4 Greening the Port of Mauritius: **Mr. Siebe Ruijgh, Head of Investments Africa, APM Terminals** 1.5 Alternative Fuels & Clean Bunkering (LNG, biofuels, amonia, hydrogen…)- **Kaoru Sohun - MOL** 1.6 MPA's vision of a Green Port –**Mr B. Dhunnoo- MPA** 1.7 Mr. Jan Hoffman - World Bank Group **Question Time (10 mins)**
10h30 – 10h45	**Tea / Coffee Break**
10h45 – 12h00	**Session 2: Creating an inclusive development of the Port**

Moderator: Raj Makoond (Eclosia Group)

Speakers:
1.Mr. Deujen Mungur, Senior Manager, Economic Development Board
2. Mr. Jan Hoffman - World Bank Group
3. Mr. Vick P. Tahalooa, Chairperson, Association Professionelle des Agents Maritimes
4. Mr Mehul Bhatt, Representative of the private sector
5. Mr Goburdhone, Representative of MPA

12h00 – 13h00 **Lunch**

Session 3: Connectivity, Safety, Efficiency
Moderator: Mehul Bhatt (ER Group)

1. Mr. Gassen Dorsamy, Managing Director, CHCL
2. Mr. Alexander Lutchmun – Managing Director, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC)
3. Mr. Hans Herchenroder – Chief Commercial Officer, Mauritius Freeport Development Co. Ltd
4. Mr. Cougen Purseramen – Group Head of the Industrial, Engineering & Logistics Clusters, IBL Group
5. Mr. Raj Mohabeer: Officer in Charge, Commission de L'Ocean Indien

13h00 – 14h15

Session 4: Positioning Mauritius in Global Trade
Facilitator: Drishty Ramdenee (MCCI)

Speakers:

1. Mr. Sunil Boodhoo, Former Director, International Trade Division
2. Mrs. Rooma Narrainen, Head of Advocacy, MCCI
3. Mr. Geerish Bucktowonsing, Director – Industry, EDB
4. Mr. Kevin Curpanen, Director, ASM Logistics
5. Mr. Siebe Ruijgh, Head of Investments Africa, APM Terminals
6. Yannis Fayd'herbe, COO IBL logistics

14h15 – 14h30 **Coffee Break**

14h30 – 15h45

Session 5: Financing and Innovation
Moderator: Drishty Ramdenee

Speakers:

13. Representative from HSBC
14. Mr. Vidhya Sagar, Chief Rating Officer, CareEdge Ratings Africa
15. Mr Mehul Bhatt
16. Mr. Siebe Ruijgh, Head of Investments Africa, APM Terminals

15h45 – 16h30 **Round Up**

Theme 8: Fisheries, Aquaculture and Food Security

08h30 – 09h00 **Registration of participants**

09h00 – 09h40 **Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)**

1. Veronique Garrioch **(Secretary to STA)**
2. Patrick Fortuno **(President, Federation des Pecheur)**
3. Meera Koonjul **(Director of Fisheries)**
4. Honorable Junior Minister, Fabrice David**, Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries**
5. Dr the Honorable Minister, Arvin Boolell**, Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries**

09h40 – 10h00 **Tea / Coffee Break**

10h00 – 10h40 **Session 1:**

Overview of the Fish Stocks in the Indian Ocean (10mins per Speaker + Questions)

Moderator: Meera Koonjul

Speakers:

14. IOTC – **Paul de Bruyn, Executive Secretary**
15. Main fish stock fished in the SIOFA region – **Marco Milardi (SIOFA)**
16. Predictive Fisheries: Science for Sustainable Food Security and Blue Economy**- Dr Sanjiba Baliarsingh (INCOIS)**

Question Time (10 mins)

10h40 – 11h20 **Session 2:**

Climate Change and Fisheries (10 mins per speaker + question time)

Moderator: Sundy Ramah

Speakers:

1. Current impacts of Climate Change on Ocean Productivity and skipjack tuna habitat – **Jean-Noel Druon, EC - DG Joint Research Centre**
2. How to mitigate the impacts of climate change in fisheries – **Dr Mitrasen Bhikajee**
3. The climatic risks on small scale fisheries – **Andre Campa (IOC)**

Question Time (10 mins)

11h20-12h10 **Session 3:**
Aquaculture (10 mins per speaker + question time)
Moderator: Vikash Munbodhe

Speakers:

17. Aquaculture on a Bigger Scale – **Pierre-Yves Semaesse (Ferme Marine de Mahebourg**
18. Oysters culture - **Mam Persand (Ocean Connect)**
19. Aquaculture Development in Mauritius – **Nushreen Jeenally (Aquaculture Division)**
20. Sea Cucumber Farming – **Dr Dev Vaitilingon (Mauricoast Ltd)**

Question Time (10 mins)

12h10-12h45 **Lunch Break**

12h45-13h30 **Session 4:**
Fishing Technologies and gears (10 mins per speaker + question)
Moderator: Cougen Purseramen (IBL)

Speakers:

14. The environment and social standards on board Purse seiners – **Borja Alonso (Alba Fishing)**
15. Smart Technology in FAD Fisheries – **Devanand Bolaky (FITEC)**
16. Artisanal Fisheries: A Perspective – **Patrick Fortuno (Apostolat de la Mer)**

Question Time (10 mins)

13h30-14h10 **Session 5:**
Value-addition in Seafood Processing (10 mins per speaker + question)
Moderator: Veronique Garrioch

1. Competent Authority role in seafood processing – **Pooven Nirsimloo (Competent Authority)**
2. The Tuna value-chain: circular economy: **Cougen Purseramen, (IBL Group Industrial, Engineering and Logistics Clusters)**
3. Small Grants Projects – **Pamela Bapoo-Dundoo (UNDP)**

Question Time (10 mins)

14h10-15h10 **Session 6: Sustainability, Markets and Opportunities Connectivity, Safety and Efficiency (10 mins per speaker + question time)**
Moderator: Pamela Bapoo-Dundoo

Speakers:

1. UK and EU markets' expectations on sustainability – **David McDiarmid (Princes)**
2. The Geopolitics of Tuna in the IO – **Veronique Garrioch (STA)**
3. Sustainable and inclusive seafood Industry – **Nima Bahramalian (UNIDO)**

4. Market Opportunities in the seafood industry – **Trishna Sookall (Ministry, Fisheries)**

Question Time (10 mins)

15h10-15h30 **Tea Break**

15h30-16h20 **Session 7: Surveillance & IUU Fishing Control (10 mins per speaker + question time)**
Moderator: Trishna Sooklall

Speakers:
1. Monitoring of Fishing Vessels in the EEZ – **Divambal Lutchmanen-Candasamy (VMS)**
2. The regional Maritime Security Architecture and IUU Fishing - **Raj Mohabeer (IOC)**
3. Combating IUU Fishing in the Mauritian EEZ – **Shakeel Mahadoo (Port State Control Unit)**
4. Nano Satellite for the surveillance of IUU Fishing – **Dr Vickram Bissonauth (MRIC)**

Question Time (10 mins)

16h20-17:30 **Session 8: Research & Development (10 mins per speaker + question time)**
Moderator: Dev Vaitilingon

Speakers:
1. Bio-Energy from tuna effluents – **Pierre Egot (IBL Energy)**
2. Exploratory Expeditions for Fisheries Resources – **Vikash Munbodhe (AFRC)**
3. Ocean and land-based solutions for climate-smart agriculture - **Oudesh Bapoo**
4. The Climate Atlas of the Indian Ocean – **Francis Marsac (IRD)**
5. Research and Development in Seaweed Aquaculture - **Jason Heckathorn (USA)**
6. Sustainable WIO Programme – **Madev Balloo – EU Delegation**

Question Time (10 mins)

17h30 **Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 9: Blue Diplomacy and Ocean Governance

08h30 – 09h00 **Registration of participants**

09h00 – 09h30 **Opening Speeches (Co-Chairs)**
1. Mr Sailesh Kumar Ramchurn **(First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**
2. Mr Fernando Andresen Guimaraes **(Director for International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries (European Commission) - Virtual**

3. H.E Ms Lisa Simrique Singh **(United Nations Resident Coordinator)**
4. Honourable Fabrice David **(Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries)**

09h30 – 10h30

Blue Diplomacy and Regional Cooperation (10mins per Speaker + Questions)
Moderator: Dr Sundy Ramah (Blue Economy Unit)

Speakers:

17. Island Leadership in Ocean Governance: Mauritius' Role in Regional and Global Dialogues- **Sailesh Kumar Ramchurn (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**
18. Integrating Maritime Law into Blue Economy Policy: Commonwealth Approaches to Sustainable Ocean Governance – **Dr Suraj Pandey (Commonwealth Climate Finance Advisor)**
19. Ocean Governance Beyond Borders: EU Engagement in Multilateral and Regional Marine Agreements – **Delphine Goguet (European Union)**
20. Blue Economy: Strategy to Policy to Effective Delivery **– David Burton (Tony Blair Institute, UK) - Virtual**

10h30 – 11h00 **Tea / Coffee Break**

11h00 – 12h00

International Maritime Law and Blue Economy Policy Integration (10mins per Speaker + Questions)
Moderator: Barkha Mossae (IUCN)

Speakers:

17. Development of a legislative framework for the Blue Economy in Mauritius – **Judith Swan (World Bank / European Union) - Virtual**
18. Governance challenges associated with the 'Blue Economy', with a particular focus on exploring opportunities for community – **Prof Michelle Voyer (ANCORS) - Virtual**
19. Sustainable blue economy and policy integration – **Dr Ameer Ebrahim (Seychelles) - Virtual**
20. Legal Tools for Ocean Stewardship: Aligning National Legislation with Global Maritime Norms – **Priyal Bunwaree (Lawyer)**

12h00 – 13h00 **Lunch**

13h00 – 14h00

Diplomacy, Negotiation, and International Advocacy (10mins per Speaker + Questions)
Moderator: Priyal Bunwaree

Speakers:

21. Regional and Global Ocean governance processes (BBNJ Negociations) – **Barkha Mossae (IUCN)**

22. BBNJ and the Future of Ocean Multilateralism: Strengthening Blue Diplomacy for Shared Marine Stewardship– **Prof. Jeremy Hills (UK Taskforce)**
23. From Negotiation to Action: AOSIS Strategies for Implementing the BBNJ Agreement in Island Regions– **Angelique Pouponneau (AOSIS)**
24. Finance and technical support for ocean-related negotiations and implementation **– Pamela Dundoo (GEF)**
25.

14h00 – 15h00	**Break-Out Sessions**
15h00 – 15h30	**Tea / Coffee Break**
15h30 – 16h00	**Wrap up & Conclusion**

Theme 10: Blue Finance

08h30 – 09h00	**Registration & Welcoming Tea / Coffee**
09h00 – 09h05	**Opening Speech** Welcome Address by: Mr. Sanjay Bhunjun, Chairperson, Economic Development Board Hon. Fabrice David, Junior Minister, Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries
09h05 – 09h15	**Investing in the Ocean Economy: Pathways to Scalable and Inclusive Blue Finance** By Mr. Nassim Oulmane, Senior Economist, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa • Current type of financing available & Gaps • Economic, Social and Ecological value & Valuation tools • Financial instruments & mechanisms for Blue Finance • Making blue finance scalable
09h15 – 09h25	**Financing Nature: Blue Carbon, Biodiversity, and the Economics of Restoration** By Mr. Moritz Von Unger, Principal | Climate Policy and Financing, Silvestrum Climate Associates • Key role of biodiversity in resilient ecosystems • Co-benefits of restoration • Economics of Restoration and Valuing Natural Capital

09h25 – 09h35	**Regional collaboration and marine tourism planning** By Dr. Sanjiba Kumar Baliarsingh, Scientist, INCOIS • Role of ocean information services • Marine ecological services & environmental monitoring • Sustainability & impacts of marine tourism
09h35 – 09h45	**Unlocking the Potential of Blue Finance** By Dr. Jamiil Jeetoo, National Economist, United Nations Development Programme • Blue Finance instruments • Case studies from countries having implemented the Blue Finance • Implementation of these models for Mauritius
09h45 – 10h00	**Tea Break**
10h00 – 10h45	**Regulatory & Policy Frameworks for Blue Finance in Mauritius** This session will highlight our current framework, ongoing initiatives, regulatory hurdles and required policy actions to unlock both public and private capital for the blue economy. Additionally, it will emphasize on the Blue bond framework to support projects. o What are the key elements for issuing a successful Blue Bond in Mauritius including the legal, environmental and financial aspects? o What are the opportunities and gaps to support Blue Investment? o What is the finance programme already operating in Mauritius and that can be replicated for the Blue Finance (For example SUNREF)? o To elaborate on the innovative financial instruments to support the Mauritius Blue Finance? (For example: Blue bonds; debt-for-nature swaps; grants + blended finance). o What's the role of ESG reporting and third-party verification in building trust? **Panelists:** ▪ Mr. Nityanand Kowlessur, Head Climate Change Center, Bank of Mauritius ▪ Mr. Warren Vardin, Ag. Senior Manager, Financial Services Commission ▪ Mr. Ajay Angoteea, Head of Sustainable Finance, ABSA Bank (Mauritius) Limited

	▪ Mrs. Jessica Naga, Group Chief Executive Officer, Mindex ▪ Mr. Vidhyasagar Lingesan, Chief Rating Officer, CARE Ratings **Moderator:** Mr. Andrew Hellyer, Programme Implementation Lead | Access to Climate Finance Taskforce, Representative of the Ministry of Finance and the British High Commission
10h45– 11h30	**Financing Blue Projects: Market Readiness, Investor Appetite and Blended Finance Structures** This session explores the requirements to build both demand (investors) and supply (projects) sides of the market to issue a successful Blue Bond with a focus on leveraging on Blue Bonds and blended finance mechanisms. • How to encourage local investors and Ocean-Focused Investment Funds to participate in a corporate Blue Bond? • What are the risks investors see in ocean-related investments and the key measures to be implemented to mitigate them? • What are the potential bankable blue projects? • How to mobilize additional private sector investment into projects that deliver both commercial returns and positive environmental or social impact. • How blended finance can be applied to Mauritius Blue Economy sector in key sub sectors such as Sustainable Fisheries & Aquaculture and Blue Carbon & Ocean Conservation amongst others. **Panelists**: ▪ Mr. Sunil Benimadhu, Chief Executive, Stock Exchange of Mauritius ▪ Mr. Antoine Musnier, Senior Associate, Mauritius Commercial Bank, Capital Market ▪ Mr. Dean D'sa, Founder of IZAR ▪ Prof Jeremy Hills, Strategic Adviser UK Taskforce **Moderator:** Mr. Daniel Essoo, Chief Executive Officer, Mauritius Bankers Association
11h30 – 12h15	**Finger lunch**
12h15– 13h00	**Blue Carbon & Ocean-Based Climate Finance** This session explores the opportunities and challenges in leveraging Blue Carbon as a mechanism for climate finance and ecosystem resilience

	• *What is Blue Carbon? Valuation, Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification Methodology and Ecosystem Opportunities in Mauritius* ✓ *"Seagrass and Mangroves as Carbon Assets"* ✓ *"Carbon Markets & the Potential for Nature-Based Solutions"* **Panelists:** ▪ Dr. Rezah Badal, Director General Prime Minister's Office Department for Continental Shelf, Maritime Zones Administration & Exploration ▪ Dr. Roshan Ramessur, Co Chair OA Africa, Advisory the Ocean Foundation, Associate Professor, HoD, Dept of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Mauritius ▪ Mrs. Kaija Barisa, Senior Economist, Blue Marine Foundation ▪ Mr. Jean Lindsay Azie, Head of Environment Unit, United Nations Development Programme **Moderator:** Dr. Suraj Pandey, Commonwealth Climate Finance Advisor
13h00 – 13h15	**Closing Remarks**



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