

What do we need for a productive and healthy ocean economy?

The ocean economy encompasses all economic activities related to the ocean. It has grown rapidly since 1970 in areas like fishing, shipping and tourism as well as new sectors like deep-sea mining and subsea cables and data centres.



1 trillion
Estimated value of the ocean economy today



3 trillion
Projected value of the ocean economy in 2030

Some ocean economy activities have greatly harmed ocean health, and worsening ocean health threatens the ocean economy in turn.

A sustainable ocean economy

Terms like “blue economy” and “decarbonised ocean economy” are increasingly used to highlight the need to lessen the ocean economy’s environmental impact.

Researchers in the **Centre for Economic Transition Expertise (CETEx)** go further. They argue for a sustainable ocean economy. This is about more than reducing the carbon emissions of ocean-related activities. It’s about managing marine resources, protecting marine and coastal ecosystems like mangrove forests, and ensuring inclusive development.

The role of blue finance

Blue finance aims to ensure good outcomes and investment for marine environments through financial instruments like blue bonds and blue loans. Yet more is needed. Sustainable Development Goal 14 focuses on “life below water” but this has received the least investment of all SDGs.



175 billion
World Economic Forum estimate of investment needed to achieve SDG 14 by 2030.



ONLY 9%
Of all investment in nature-based solutions to climate change, only 9% has been directed at oceans.

How do you think we could bridge this investment gap?

Shipping is a key part of the ocean and world economy: 80% of global goods are transported by sea. Shipping is also responsible for 2.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.



Coastal and marine tourism makes up at least 50% of total global tourism. However, the sector is expected to contribute 5.3% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, up from 3.7% in 2005.



A sustainable ocean economy isn’t just about shifting away from fossil fuels for low-carbon alternatives (decarbonisation). It also integrates social objectives to ensure ecosystem protection.