



Blue Economy - Wave 93

(Series on "Blue Economy" By Capt. Gajanan Karanjikar)



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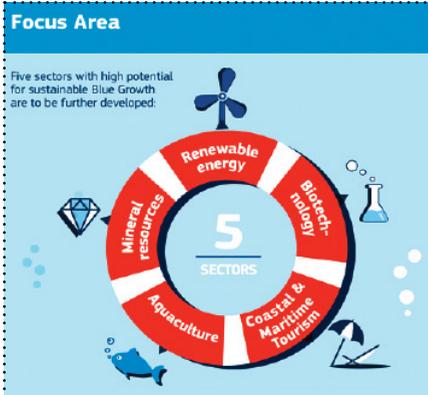
Blue Economy and Ocean Governance :

With blue economy on its forefront, the time of Marine Spatial planning has finally arrived.

Marine Spatial Planning can play a significant role in the growth of a sustainable blue economy, in particular as a catalyst for innovative blue technologies. By identifying suitable testbeds and demonstration sites, it provides space to test innovative technological solutions and facilitate their de-risking.

Blue economy, which covers all economic activities related to the world's oceans and seas, is predicted to be an important driver for economic growth in the coming years. According to a conservative projection by the OECD, its value-added output could even double in size over the next decade

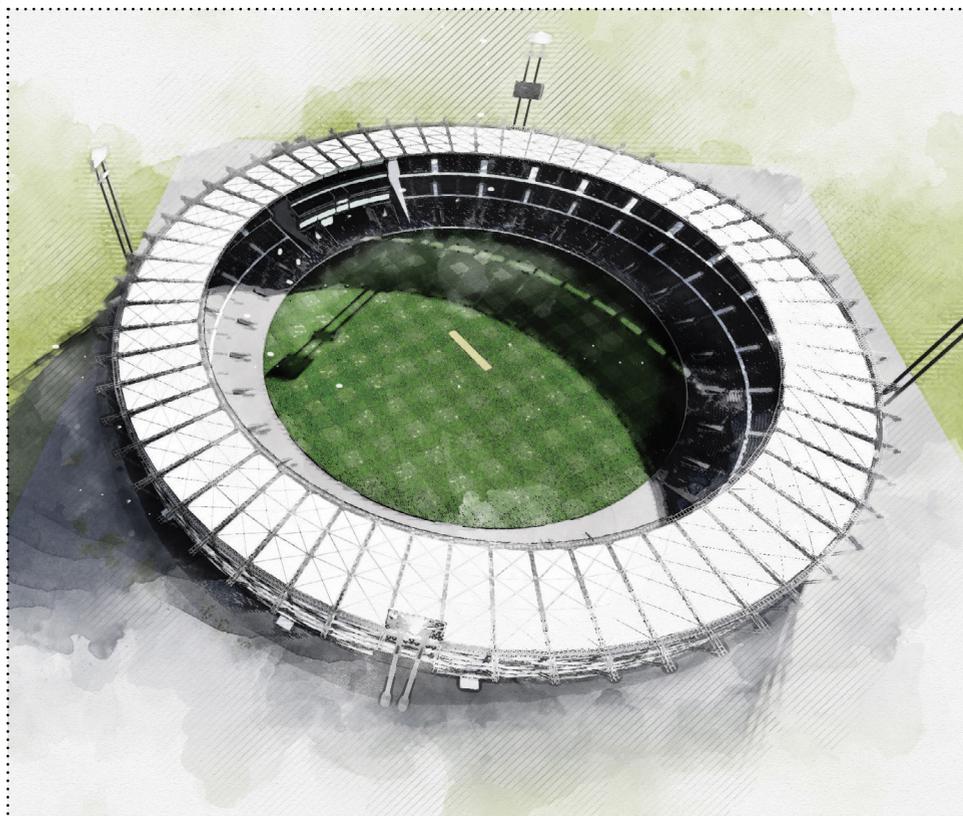
Before the last century, ocean space was used mainly for two purposes: marine transport and fishing. Conflicts between these uses were infrequent, except around a few ports, with little need for integrated, comprehensive marine spatial planning. But today, the human uses of ocean space are growing more intense and varied, yet fisheries are still mostly managed separately from oil and gas development, which in turn is managed separately from marine navigation and offshore renewable energy, and so on, despite real conflicts between and among these multiple uses.



This single-sector planning and management approach (one sector at a time) often fails to resolve conflicts among users of marine space, rarely dealing explicitly with trade-offs among uses, and even more rarely dealing with conflicts between the cumulative effects of multiple uses on the marine environment. New uses of marine space, such as ocean energy extraction (e.g., fossil fuels) and generation (e.g., wind), increase the pressure on limited marine space and the potential conflict between different uses. Single-sector management has also tended to reduce and dissipate the effect of enforcement at sea because of the scope and geographic coverage involved and the environmental conditions in which monitoring and enforcement have to operate. Relative to terrestrial environments, little 'public policing' of human activities takes place at sea.

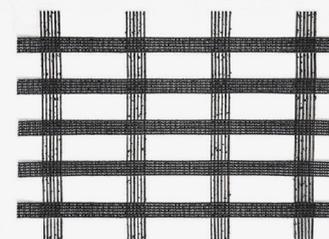
As a consequence of this lack of coordination, integration, and enforcement, in addition to many other stressors such as pollution, invasive species, climate change, ocean acidification, and illegal fishing, marine ecosystems around the world are increasingly imperilled. But awareness is growing that the ongoing degradation in marine ecosystems is, in large part, a failure issue of ineffective governance. Many scientists and policy analysts have advocated reforms centered on the idea of 'ecosystem-based management' (Arkema et al. 2006). However, to date, a practical method for translating this concept into operational management practice has not emerged. One step toward ecosystem-based management is the increasing worldwide interest in 'marine spatial planning'.

From a policy perspective, Marine Spatial Planning is instrumental in implementing a strategic and integrated approach to developing a sustainable blue economy. And because our oceans and seas connect to sustainable life at so many different levels, we shouldn't underestimate the impact of such an approach. Ultimately, a sustainable blue economy not just helps us achieve SDG14 (Life Below Water) but enables us to impact a broad set of SDGs.



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