





IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF KENYA'S OCEAN COMMITMENTS

UPDATES FROM UNOC 2022, UNOC 2017, AND SBEC 2018



UNOC 2022

COMMITMENT

1. Establish a Blue Economy Bank/Fund to support the growth and development of the Blue Economy sector

STATUS

Kenya's unwavering commitment to fostering the growth and development of the Blue Economy Sector and effective ocean management is evident through the ongoing establishment of the Blue Economy Fund. Presently, the Fish Levy Trust Fund, established under the Fisheries Management and Development Act 2016, stands as a precursor to this initiative. The Regulations, validated up to the national level, currently await review and legal drafting at the Office of the Attorney General before parliamentary consideration. The appointment of the inaugural Fund Board of Trustees in 2019 marks a significant step towards realizing the broader vision of sustainable and prosperous ocean endeavors.

UNOC 2017

COMMITMENT

1. Enhancing the management of both offshore and inshore fisheries is a pivotal objective.

STATUS

Kenya, part of the High-Level Panel on Sustainable Ocean Economy, is committed to a transformative strategy aligning with UN Agenda 2030. Priorities include combating illegal fishing using innovative technologies like digital traceability and ratifying the WTO Fisheries' Subsidies Agreement 2022. Engaging in regional collaborations such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and Indian Ocean Rim Association strengthens research and management efforts. Implementation of FAO Port State Measures, Fisheries Management Plans, and Fleet capacity development ensures responsible fisheries and benefits local communities. With a focus on SDG 14 target 14.b.1, Kenya's National Fishing Fleet Plan aims to register 73 vessels for optimal marine industrial utilization.

UNOC 2017

COMMITMENT

2. Promoting the development of smallholder aquaculture and prioritizing fisheries value chains is a strategic imperative.

STATUS

In response to a 2019 Presidential Directive, Kenya initiated a fishing crew training program aiming to equip 5000 individuals with deep-sea fishing skills. To date, 875 fishers have been trained, enhancing employability in national, regional, and international industrial fishing fleets. Efforts extend to the Kenya Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), where industrial fishing is intensifying, and fishing grounds expand into deeper waters. The National Fishing Fleet Plan, under review at IOTC, targets registering 73 vessels for optimal marine industrial fisheries utilization. The procurement of 26 fishing boats for 8 Beach Management Units (BMUs) furthers this strategy, fostering sustainable marine resource management. The Marine Spatial Plan, guided by a comprehensive MSP Implementation Structure, emphasizes collaboration across government entities, steering committees, and technical working groups. The acquisition of the research vessel R.V. Mtafiti enhances scientific surveys, providing critical data on fish stocks, biomass, distribution, and growth characteristics in territorial and EEZ waters. This holistic approach underscores Kenya's commitment to informed and sustainable marine resource utilization.

UNOC 2017

COMMITMENT

3. Increase Monitoring, control and surveillance in Kenya's EEZ to prevent IUU and increase security in our waters

STATUS

Kenya has effectively implemented measures to comply with the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), including establishing fishing ports in Liwatoni, Mombasa County, and Shimoni in Kwale County. Modern landing sites have been developed in Ngomeni and Kichwa cha Kati in Kilifi County, Kibuyuni, Vanga, and Gazi in Kwale County. Capacity building for onboard and port inspections by inter-agencies, along with the acquisition of patrol vessels, has been prioritized. The Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) center at Liwatoni, Mombasa County, managed by Kenya Fisheries Service under the Kenya Coast Guard Service, features a Command Centre equipped with a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and AIS to safeguard EEZ resources. The country recently procured six patrol vessels, including two 12-meter Patrol Boats and four Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs). Officers have undergone training for the operationalization and maintenance of these assets.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

4. Enhancing the safeguarding of marine and water resources is a paramount objective.

STATUS

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Kenya has implemented comprehensive strategies for mangrove rehabilitation, conservation, and sustainable use. The commitment extends to investing in marine research, fostering ocean knowledge management, and ensuring equitable access to marine resources for shared prosperity. Kenya aims to protect 30% of its oceans through highly protected Marine Protected Areas by 2030. The Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) actively monitors national marine litter, providing crucial data for SDG 14.1.1. Initiatives include a ban on single-use carrier bags, the development of a National Marine Litter Management Action Plan, and partnerships to combat plastic litter and address offshore oil spill prevention. The Sustainable Waste Management Policy further contributes to addressing marine plastic pollution. The nation participates as a Lead Partnering Country in the IMO-FAO-Norway GloLitter Partnerships Project, making a significant contribution to SDG 14. Kenya's framework for offshore oil spill prevention aligns with the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre for the African Region, part of the IMO-Global MTCC Network, promoting climate change mitigation in the maritime industry.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

5. Plastic and Waste Management

STATUS

In 2019, Kenya banned single-use plastics in protected areas, a measure overseen by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to prevent plastic entry into national parks and other protected zones. The Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) conducts national marine litter monitoring, supplying data for SDG 14.1.1, crucial for local action against marine litter pollution. Recognizing plastic's adverse impact on oceans, Kenya supports UNEA 5.2's decision to form an intergovernmental negotiating committee for an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, highlighting its commitment to global efforts addressing this environmental challenge.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

6. Strengthen maritime security and safety in collective waters to foster unrestricted national and global trade, connectivity, and business prosperity.

STATUS

The Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA) focuses on enhancing maritime safety and security by bolstering capacities and enforcing international conventions. This includes ensuring visiting ships adhere to safety, manning, load line, and marine environment regulations. KMA also coordinates search and rescue efforts. The Government established the Maritime Security Committee within Kenya's Intelligence and Security Mechanism to jointly manage risks in the maritime domain, safeguarding national interests. The State Department for Shipping and Maritime leads the development of a National Maritime Security Risk Register (NMSRR) and National Maritime Security Strategy (NMSS). These initiatives underscore Kenya's commitment to proactive and comprehensive maritime security measures, aligning with international standards.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

7. Implement the Eastern and Southern Africa Indian Ocean Regional Accord on operation, coordination and information exchange

STATUS

The IOC-Global Ocean Teacher Academy for English-speaking African countries is based in Kenya. Kenyan marine scientists played a pivotal role in contributing data and co-chairing the Editorial Board for the 2020 Global Ocean Science Report. Launched in December 2020 during the 60th anniversary celebration of IOC-UNESCO, this report reflects Kenya's significant involvement in advancing ocean science on the global stage.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

8. Combating IUU through taking measures to enhance the security and safety of our collective waters

STATUS

Kenya has implemented the Fisheries Management and Development Act, 2016, establishing the Kenya Fisheries Service (KeFS) to regulate IUU Fishing and promote the conservation, management, and development of aquatic resources for community livelihoods. As a party to the FAO Ports States Measures Agreement (PSMA), Kenya combats Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing. The Kenya Coast Guard Service (KCGS), mandated by the Kenya Coast Guard Service Act, 2018, safeguards maritime resources, including fisheries in territorial waters. Additionally, the government enhances institutional capacity for licensing fishing vessels and surveillance, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable fisheries management and combating illegal fishing practices.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

9. Sustainable fisheries development

STATUS

See action taken under 2017 UNOC commitment 1 and 2

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

10. Establish a Blue Economy Bank/Fund to support growth and development of Blue Economy sector

STATUS

See action taken under 2017 UNOC commitment 1 and 2

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

11. Take measures to revive Kenya's maritime transport by building and expanding the ports, and shipping facilities and partnering with global shipping lines

STATUS

Executing the Kenya Ports Master Plan (2018-2047) involves multifaceted actions, encompassing the establishment of the Lamu port, enhancing existing ports through deeper and wider berths, and the development of lake and smaller ports to harness the full potential of the blue economy. In parallel, the government is crafting a comprehensive National Blue Economy Strategy, undergoing extensive public participation up to the national level. Simultaneously, an Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee has been appointed to initiate the formulation of a Maritime Strategy. These strategic initiatives underscore Kenya's commitment to maximizing the benefits of its maritime resources and fostering sustainable development within the blue economy framework.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

12. Technical Assistance and Capacity Building:

STATUS

In 2019, Kenya, following a Presidential Directive, initiated a fishing crew training program aiming to equip 5000 fishers with deep-sea fishing skills. Currently, 875 fishers have undergone theoretical and practical training, including Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) courses at Bandari Maritime Academy.

Simultaneously, an African e-learning center on Maritime engineering is in progress through a partnership between the University of Nairobi, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU). An MoU between the Kenyan government and IAMU sets the foundation, with plans for collaborative partnerships with global institutes. The operationalization of the African Blue Economy Innovation Institute at the University of Nairobi is underway.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

13. Reduce cost and accessibility of seafarer training and Youth capacity building

STATUS

Post-COVID, a Youth Fund supporting maritime sector youth capacity building was established via a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Department of Shipping & Maritime, the State Department of Youth, and the Youth Enterprise Fund. Absorption into the program is gaining momentum. In facilitating access to maritime education, Kenya Maritime Authority collaborates with the Higher Education Loans Board, offering loans to students. Further, the State Department for Shipping and Maritime is pioneering the development of a national seafarers training program, aiming to annually train 4000 world-class seafarers upon completion, enhancing skilled workforce contribution to the maritime industry.

SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

14. Enhance capabilities for Kenya seafarers to work on ships across the vast oceans by inter alia, upgrading the Kenya Maritime School

STATUS

Established by a Presidential Order in 2018, Bandari Maritime Academy (BMA) is evolving into a regional hub for Blue Economy education. Over three years, BMA has trained 2000 maritime professionals in diplomas, certificates, Port operations, and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) courses. The academy has also equipped over 400 hospitality professionals with basic safety training, enhancing employability on international cruise ships. Expecting a surge in employment opportunities post-COVID, Kenya has formed partnerships with institutions globally, including MOUs with the City of Glasgow College and the governments of Jamaica, Liberia, Palau, and Panama.


SBEC 2018

COMMITMENT

15. Sustain maritime workforce training at JKUAT, ensuring seamless graduate integration into the Blue Economy and fostering research in maritime shipping.

STATUS

The State Department of Shipping and Maritime, in an ongoing initiative, has garnered support from the Saudi State-owned shipping company (BAHRI). This collaboration includes the employment of 13 engineers from JKUAT who are currently engaged at sea, with plans for additional hires in the coming months following thorough vetting. Furthermore, the Ministry of Transport of Saudi Arabia has expressed willingness to develop and formalize a maritime cooperation agreement, outlining mutual requirements and fostering stronger ties between the two entities.



“ In the vast expanse of our oceans, Kenya charts a course towards responsible marine stewardship. From sustainable fisheries to marine conservation, our commitment flows deep. Let our actions echo the resilience of our oceans. — Dr Makilla”