

**REPORT OF THE 2ND SYMPOSIUM OF THE
AFRICAN MARINE ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (AFMESI)**

HELD ON: NOVEMBER 6, 2020

LOCATION: LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

Introduction

The African Marine Environment Sustainability Initiative (AFMESI) held its 2nd Symposium to deliberate on issues related to marine pollution prevention and control in Africa's oceans—while proffering sustainable strategies for the implementation of holistic mechanisms and actions to tackle the urgent and emerging challenges

The theme of the event was Marine Pollution Prevention and Control Towards Blue Economy.

The Symposium was held physically and virtually (Livestream). The in-person event was held in Victoria Island, Lagos State, Nigeria. COVID-19 precautionary measures were observed. The event was organised by the Initiative for Inclusive Dialogue in Nigeria (IIDN). Funding support for the event was generously provided by Ocean Networks Canada, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. The Nigerian Bottling Company Limited provided some refreshments. Also, a pledge of support was made by The Ocean Foundation, Washington, DC, USA.

Objectives of the Symposium

The overall objectives of the Symposium were to critically review the impediments in the development of a coordinated African Blue Economy, and develop a Roadmap for the implementation of an inclusive Blue Economy framework.

Delegates



Participants at the Symposium were drawn from a diverse and representative set of stakeholders. As planned, the event drew regional and some international engagement. Participants included representatives of international organizations, civil servants in the maritime sector, representatives of regional organizations, ocean enthusiasts, leaders of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), as well as, consultants and advisors from the pri-

vate sector.

Opening Session

To kick-off the program, participants were invited to sing/observe the Nigerian national anthem.

Welcome Remarks



The singing/observance of the Nigerian national anthem was followed by Welcome Remarks from the Executive Secretary of AFMESI, Ms. Chiamaka Mogo.

Ms. Mogo greeted participants and shared briefly on the importance and symbolism of the 2nd Symposium. She highlighted that it was an offshoot of the 1st Symposium which was on *Ocean Noise*. This time around, the Symposium had a broader theme: Marine Pollution Prevention and Control Towards Blue Economy. She outlined the cultural and economic treasures of the African marine ecosystems and emphasised the need for African nations and peoples to strongly participate in strengthening the continent's Blue Economy. She added that the 2nd Symposium was planned in such a way that it would be interactive (there was a Q&A session), to maximise learning and the sharing of ideas. To end her Welcome Remarks, Ms. Mogo wished everyone fruitful deliberations.

Goodwill Messages

Messages of Goodwill were delivered by several stakeholders:

- The Food and Beverage Alliance (FBRA): A goodwill message was conveyed by the Chair of FBRA, Matthieu Seguin, who also serves as the Managing Director of The Nigerian Bottling Company Limited. The Executive Secretary of FBRA, Agharese Lucia Onaghise, read the message on behalf of the Chair of FBRA. In the message, he appreciated AFMESI for bringing together several stakeholders to dialogue and make organizational as well as individual commitments to eliminate marine litter. He also mentioned that FBRA is available and committed to partnering with AFMESI in achieving its pan-African mandate vis-a-vis marine pollution management and prevention.

- NIMASA: The Goodwill message from NIMASA included Engr. Ibrahim Shettima delivered a Goodwill message on behalf of the Executive Director of Operations, NIMASA, Mr. Shehu Ahmed. He thanked Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo and AFMESI for organising such a timely event. He also stressed that NIMASA will be pleased to partner and support AFMESI's work in the long-term.
- The Ocean Foundation: President Mark J. Spalding shared a goodwill message on behalf of The Ocean Foundation. He stated that the Foundation was happy to pledge support for the event, as there are visible connections within the Foundation's work and the mandates of AFMESI. He shared a brief history of the Foundation's past marine supports within Africa and their plans to engage more with crucial stakeholders, within the West African region.
- Ocean Networks Canada: Dwight Owens, the User Engagement Officer of Ocean Networks Canada, delivered Goodwill remarks. He expressed that Ocean Networks Canada was pleased to support AFMESI's 2nd Symposium. He appreciated the AFMESI team for its coordination efforts and shared emphasised the benefits of such an event geared at achieving a cleaner, well-nurtured marine environment.



- Credo Marine and Energy Services Limited: Goodwill remarks were delivered by Oluwafisayomi Adesina. She briefed the audience on the work of Credo Marine and Energy Services Limited in applying modern technology in enabling Blue Economy development. She thanked the President of AFMESI, Dr. Mogo and the AFMESI team for their work. In addition, she stressed the importance of such a Symposium, in terms of knowledge exchange and awareness promotion.

Lead Paper Presentation: Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo

The Lead Paper was delivered by Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo and was themed: *“Connecting the ocean, the values, stressors of the ocean and Blue Economy”*.

Dr. Mogo recalled that at the first United Nations Conference on Human Environment in 1972, sustainable development was labelled, “fundamental”. She noted that the development of a comprehensive and sustainable African Blue Economy faced major challenges including the following:

Environmental stressors -

- Pollution
- Climate change and stranded assets

- Swept-off environment, loss of resources and displacement of coastal communities
- Safety and security issues.



Dr. Mogo also noted that the African Union (AU) has identified the development of a sustainable, African Blue Economy as a priority goal in achieving the aspiration of a prosperous Africa. This is in-line with the principles and goals of Agenda 2063 of AU.

The challenges for most African nations were noted as bordering on the following factors:

- Lack of true cooperation and inadequate regulatory instruments.
- Lack of coordinated efforts in the implementation and enforcement of regulatory instruments.
- Lack of state-of-the-art compliance enforcement devices and platforms, and also inadequate maritime courts to follow up on prosecutions.
- Inadequate databases that will aid scientific and political decisions.
- Inadequacy in the resolution of boundary disputes and other marine governance and neocolonialism issues.
- Improvement on national and regional integration to support cohesiveness of partnerships in driving growth of the Blue Economy.
- Some states not acceding to and implementing international conventions;
- Some global instruments not meeting up the mandate to protect the countries from exploitation.
- Deepening poverty and lack of awareness of how the Blue economy can improve the quality of life and wellbeing in African countries.

In proffering solutions, Dr. Mogo proposed the following:

- ‘Africanization’ of global instruments, such as the Bamako Convention on Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Waste.
- Inclusion of the coastal communities in the management and resolution of issues and affairs, and putting a stop to “blue grab”.
- Establishment of instruments like Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)—UNGA Marine Genetic Resources (MGR); Area-Based Management Tools; Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA); Capacity-Building and Transfer of Marine Technology.

- Encouraging significant cooperation and bonding among the nations to address the pollution issues mentioned above is a top priority.
- Deploy real-time scientific investigation of the health of Africa's oceans starting with regional identification of hotspots to enable restoration, including classified case-by-case clean up and restoration efforts.
- Acceding to instruments of marine protection such as the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Convention and many others.

Dr. Mogo's presentation also listed the areas that AFMESI will focus on to support regional actions towards a sustained Blue Economy:

- Creating awareness by engaging with coastal communities and nations.
- Continuous collaboration with AU, with emphasis on capacity-building and development;
- Production of a mapping of pollution status in marine ecosystems across Africa;
- Assisting African nations that may need help with developing their Country Blue Economy strategic packages;
- Establishing partnerships with Scientific Research organisations on topical issues such as noise pollution and life at sea, marine litter management and others;
- Support nations with successful implementation and negotiations of international Conventions e.g. the IMO;
- Ensuring implementation of hybrid fireside talks and collaborations with global stakeholders.

In concluding, Dr. Mogo reiterated that her final message is the need to stop the "business as usual" approach in managing the marine environment and to ensure that the Blue Economy must emerge as a platform to transform socio-economic standards and enhance livelihoods in Africa. Hence, the need to deploy urgent and pragmatic use of instruments of intervention, including legal frameworks, regional and global collaboration.

Second Paper: Dr. Richard Dewey

The second paper was presented by Dr. Richard Dewey, Associate Director of the Science Division, Ocean Networks Canada. The presentation was titled:

"Shipping Noise Reduction during COVID 19 in Western Canada Pacific Oceans - Shipping Noise and how it is impacting the Environment".

In his presentation, Dr. Dewey noted that there are many sources of sounds in the oceans, primarily associated with shipping, which is a form of pollution. Dr. Dewey did mention that the COVID-19 economic slowdown created positive impacts in the natural environment, due to less traffic in the oceans e.g. there were much fewer containers carrying vessels, crew ships and ferries. The data collected showed that shipping reduction from late 2019 through the summer of 2020 resulted in significantly quieter oceans. This phenomenon appears global, as similar data were noted in the open



oceans and seas. The impact of this on marine life and coastal communities has to be determined by analyzing relevant data. Dr. Dewey established that much of the research and analysis is still ongoing and results will be published shortly.

In conclusion, he noted that in Africa, shipping is anticipated to increase significantly over the next couple of decades, therefore the goal is to establish a mechanism for an effective long-term monitoring of populations and communities in coastal environments.

Panel Discussions



A robust panel session took place and was moderated by Dr. Awwal Bamanga. Panelists also addressed the Lead Paper presented by Dr. Mogo.

Dr. Bamanga noted that the previous presentations provided major contexts of how Africa's Blue Economy can be developed. The presentations had set out key actions, as well as lessons learned based on best practices from African and global perspectives. Dr. Bamanga emphasized that institu-

tional collaborations are fundamental to the achievement of Blue Economy growth, thus AFMESI's support toward regional partnerships is fundamental.

Dr. Bamanga then introduced the Panelists who further brainstormed on the Lead Paper presented. The Panelists highlighted several important factors that would contribute to rapid development of Africa's Blue Economy. They also unveiled the importance of African nations repositioning their drive for the Blue Economy, while espousing the economic benefits for continent and communities existing within it.

The Panelists made key comments as summarised below:

Emeka Akabogu, Senior Partner at Akabogu & Associates and AFMESI Advisory Board Member.

He is a maritime law specialist. During Emeka Akabogu's briefing, he noted the need for a time-bound, Indigenous working framework that would move from theoretical to



actionable possibilities for Africa's Blue Economy. Hence, sustainably harnessing the inexhaustible opportunities in the petroleum, transport, coastal tourism industries where micro, small and large scale businesses could create value-oriented wealth. He proposed that regulatory mechanisms would have to address bottlenecks and security issues.

Dr. (Mrs.) Patience Obatola, Director and Head of Fisheries Resources, Department at the Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research, (NIOMR) Lagos, Nigeria.



Dr. Obatola noted the wide gap in data availability for academic and scientific researches needed to support informed decision making in Africa's maritime industries. She underscored the need for extensive exploration and study of the seas, oceans and the earth's marine life in general. She concluded that such steps would in no small measure, aid the formulation and implementation of a policy framework and reform strategy for the African Blue Economy, especially the fisheries and aquaculture sector. That is, to meet current needs and future demands.

Prof. Magnus Onuoha, Professor of Economics, Gregory University, Uturu, Nigeria and, Executive Director, West Africa Green Economic Development Institute (WAGEDI)



Prof. Onuoha in his briefing, highlighted diverse benefits (jobs, plastic waste management, ocean governance etc.) of the development of the Blue Economy. He explained that a framework for the development of the African Blue Economy implementation index needs to be concretely developed, urgently. He emphasised that the index should take into account Governance issues, Mitigation, Adaptation, Finance and, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV).

Ms. Brou Marie-Béatrice, Resource Mobilization and Donor Relations Consultant, African Risk Capacity and Advisory Board Member, AFMESI



Ms. Brou has extensive legal experience in the maritime and legal sectors. In her briefing which was delivered virtually, she outlined the current economic dependence of the continent, on trade by water transport. Ms. Brou made clear connections between a maintained Blue Economy and the achievement of many of the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs). She noted that a framework for research and development that will embrace partnership advocacy, policy dialogue platforms and international maritime standards within the continent is inevitable, if the Blue Economy must thrive in Africa.

Ibukun Adewumi, AFMESI Director of International Partnerships



Ibukun Adewumi discussed the need for - scientific information sharing, grassroots, regional and international partnerships - to build a strong Blue Economy in Africa. He outlined some of the regional and international partners of AFMESI. He stressed that AFMESI has been consistent in establishing relevant international partnerships.

Key highlights from the Panel Discussions (including the Q & A session)

- There is need to promote effective institutional collaborations to drive ocean governance.
- With over 60% of Africa's population below 35 years, there is urgency to create new jobs with the participation of youths.
- There is need to bridge gender gaps and inequalities by ensuring affirmative actions for gender inclusion in the Blue Economy;
- A sustainable, African Blue Economy will improve food security;
- There is need to outline and drive climate change responsiveness and resilience towards achieving the overall Blue Climate targets.
- There is need for coherent policy advocacy and implementation of actions in alignment with the ethos of a sustained African Blue Economy.
- There is urgency to reverse trends of marine pollution and prevent a potential trajectory where the oceans and seas will contain more plastics than fish.
- Any sustainable strategy for the Blue Economy should ensure protection of local fish markets and fish production across Africa.

- There is need to ensure adequate understanding and inclusion of the financial costs of roadmap development and implementation, mobilisation of resources, as well as costs of developing proposals for conducting assessment of existing blue economy investments and their sources.
- There is also the need to ensure coherence of the AFMESI Strategy with other Blue Economy Strategies and Instruments.

Outcomes of the Symposium

1. The mandates of AFMESI were clarified, especially for the benefit of participants who may not have been familiar with the organization's works.
2. Linkages were made with already-existing regional and international, marine environment regulatory guides.
3. The Symposium generated a wide range of opportunities for stakeholders from across the continent and different sectors to share experiences and lessons learnt. Thus, providing a solid basis to establish new networks and partnership ideas for driving the African Blue Economy roadmap.
4. The AFMESI Team stated its commitment to building a Strategic Workplan aimed at facilitating the resolutions (see next section) that were made at the event.

Resolutions

The following resolutions were made at the 2nd Symposium:

1. A comprehensive program be established to monitor shipping noise in African waters.
2. A regulatory mechanism be established to address legal bottlenecks and security issues along African waters.
3. The Blue Economy implementation index needs to be developed urgently and should cover Governance issues, Mitigation, Adaptation, MRV and Finance.
4. A framework for research and development including partnership advocacy and fireside dialogue platforms that would buttress the need for international maritime standards to be developed.



5. Immediate development of business models to produce implementation plans based on the roles of the petroleum, transport and coastal tourism industries vis-a-vis the African Blue Economy roadmap.
6. Building a strong communication network starting with the stakeholders attending this Symposium and build a critical mass of interests towards implementing the Blue Economy in Nigeria and African in general
7. Development of a Blue Economy Roadmap by AFMESI that will include:
 - Strategic planning of supports for AFMESI to implement the objectives.
 - Selection of pilot African countries to drive engagements for the Blue Economy, based on agreed criteria.
 - Engagement of several African coastal communities, as well as, international partners.

Closing Remarks



The closing statement was given by Dr. Mogo who is, in addition to her lead role at AFMESI, the immediate past Director of the Marine Environment and Management Department of NIMASA and Thematic Lead on Marine Ecosystem and Management at the Nigerian Economic Summit Group.

Dr. Mogo thanked participants for the robust discussions and recommendations made. She pledged that AFMESI will engage proactively towards those. She thanked the Symposium partners, Panelists, Moderator and all present for taking out the time to attend the event. Dr. Mogo also thanked members of the AFMESI Team for their commitments to ensuring a viable Blue Economy for Africa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mogo'.

Chiamaka Mogo, BSoc.Sc., MPPGA

Executive Secretary,

on behalf of the African Marine Environment Sustainability Initiative (AFMESI)

December 10, 2020