

BLUE ECONOMY IN THE BAY OF BENGAL

Bangladesh, India & Sri Lanka

WORKSHOP 2: BLUE ECONOMY IN THE BAY OF BENGAL: CRACKING IMPLEMENTATION BOTTLENECK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our first workshop was held in November 26th in understanding the challenges with the participation of several entities. Our second workshop aims to continue this understanding by gathering experts that participate to the first edition and new experts and to start a strategic conversation with the AFD.

Opening remarks by Joël Ruet, The Bridge Tank & Mrs. Hélène Djoufelkit, Research Director of the AFD.

Panel 1: Data collection for improved monitoring of the blue economy's assets

Dr Shailesh Nayak, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), India, identified the need for coordination in the Indian level and the global level, such as the richness of blue resources should call governance to be feared by science to protection and develop the knowledge, the fish stock is constantly evolving due to climate change impacts and technology used at the service of knowledge and the need of having a framework for data collection.

Mrs. Akshita Sharma, Biodiversity Portfolio Manager, AFD Delhi, focused on the problem India and the region are facing within the fisheries sector, highlighting there is an urgent need of data management and how it represents an important role in supporting the fishery resources monitoring, assessment and management systems.

Mr. Nishan Perera, Blue Resources Trust, Sri Lanka, focused his presentation on resources management challenges in Sri Lanka, links between science and research focusing on coral risks, and solutions for management and sustainable mechanisms as policy tools. Concerning resources management challenges in Sri Lanka, Mr. Perera listed ecosystem degradation, declining fish stock, policy contradiction and sectoral/institutional approach, data gaps and economic losses. He particularly insisted on **fisheries**, explaining that it's not only a problem of fishery itself but on the scale and lack of management; on **policy contradiction**, as in Sri Lanka there is no coercive approach to international policy at national policy level and at implementation and research and data gathering level. **Data gaps** are mainly due to work in silo or lack of coordination between actors, and he highlighted the need for a better resources inventory with long term perspective, as there is no strong temporal monitoring of Sri Lankan resources, in synch to a **need to look at financial mechanisms solutions in long term implementation rather than specific projects.**

Mr. Abu Saleh Khan, Executive Director, Institute of Water Modelling, Bangladesh focused his presentation on methodology data collection and monitoring's value chain in Bangladesh and its issues in Bangladesh and in the region, expressing the lack of appropriate vessels, equipment and technology to

better ensure data collection and monitoring. He mentioned a series of solutions for improving data collection and monitoring: **resources identification, marine planning, policy for exploitation of blue economy, investment, training and capacity building and sustainable exploitation of resources.**

Panel 2: National framework for improved coordination between public, private entities, researchers and implementers

Opening remarks by Joël Ruet, The Bridge Tank & Mr Jacky Amprou, Regional Director for South-Asia, AFD.

Dr. Saurabh Thakur, Associate Fellows, National Maritime Foundation, India, expressed the idea of **blue economy as a connecting element in the region** that can lead to a regional blue economy strategy. He highlights **the necessity of understanding top down and bottom up contents on how the blue economy is going to be implemented in the region**

Dr. (Mrs.) Chime Youdon, Associate Fellows, National Maritime Foundation, India, insisted on 3 elements to keep the conversation going to start identifying blue economy's solutions: **Data collection methodology; Lack of climate change modeling and climate projection in India & Regional cooperation related to blue economy.**

Mr. Shri Aditya Dash, Vice Chairman, Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), India, explained the challenges of **multiple stakeholders across the value chain of blue economy.** He finally proposed **3 pilot projects** (An aquaculture Improvement Program (AIP) with MPEDA's naCSA (National Center for Sustainable Aquaculture; Smallholder Farmers are the foundation of the global shrimp aquaculture value chain ; Interventions required improving productivity via effective disease management and accurate weather forecasts at the micro level.as a solution for blue economy's improvement)

Mrs. Dharshani Lahandapura, Chairperson, the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA), Sri Lanka, presented the blue economy's potential in Sri Lanka; a need for long term plan & a comprehensive national policy strategy and road map, a presentation of projects and activities and a presentation of MEPA's identification of challenges, such as pollution, multi-stakeholders/fragmented institutions, data driven decision making, data repository, baseline data, continuous research aligned with industry requirements & financing.

Mr. Khairul Majid Mahmud, Director, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Bangladesh, gave a deep overview of Bangladesh blue economy's vision and proposes a series of **recommendations & Solutions: public and private sector can work in tandem; engagement of the private sector can bring in relevant 4IR technologies-IOT, Artificial intelligence, Robotics and GPS mapping of the ocean floor; joint research studies** of potential avenues like ocean infrastructure, fishery, shipping and off-shore energy through PPP model; to meet the long-term and low-cost financing needs in blue economy scopes, capital market led bond financing "**Blue Bonds**" for the businesses and Government agencies in ocean economy.

Dr. Arnab Das, Director, Maritime Research Center, India, commented the previous presentations by highlighting 5 main key points to be discussed: **A user guide for industrial partnership; Developing blue economy supported by private sector; Consolidate the diversity; Financing; How to work on sustainable entrepreneurship?**

Mr. Ameya Prabhu, Vice-President, Indian Chamber of Commerce, India, mentioned that **the challenge today is to create a sustainable blue economy on the main blue economy's sectors: Blue energy; Aquaculture; Coastal and maritime tourism. Blue biotechnology and Resources (mining, oil & gas).** He proposes solutions: **Promoting a partnership approach between all members in Southeast Asia;**

Mutualizing and boosting further investments; Creating a joint strategy; Proposition for a special planning of the Ocean floor and resources planning with a holistic approach Working together.

Mrs. Panchali Ellepola, Project Officer, AFD Sri Lanka, presented the main challenges related to blue economy in Sri Lanka: Poor services; Market conditions are very quantitative-oriented rather than qualitative-oriented; The lack of transparency and monitoring, these practices contribute to maintaining long term overfishing practices. She explained the “preparatory project for fishery harbors improvement” on **4 areas: Improve harbor infrastructures; Enhance harbor management capacity & practices; Strengthen the management of Sri Lanka marine & fishery resources; Create value chain monitoring.**

Mr. Reda Souirgi, Country Director Sri Lanka, AFD, explained that Sri Lanka wishes to be a hub for maritime services but there are still some challenges, such as **institutional capacity building in Sri Lanka is lacking; challenge of sustainability & challenge of informality**

Mrs. Soma Mitra-Muckerjee, Director – Head of Projects, The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, India, explained that the BCCI has financed projects for many fish farming families in Bengal. There are still some challenges to be reached, such as, **sustainability and awareness**. Her solution: **active private entities should connect their project at the very bottom level.**

Mr. Pattabhi Rama Rao, Group Director, Ocean Observations, Modelling and Data Assimilation Group, Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), presented ocean data and information as a key element of blue economy, identifying 2 ways forward to support blue economy thanks to data: **Develop a national framework to integrate environmental, social and economic data from different stakeholders to stimulate the blue economy; Use of ICT in effectively and efficiently for decisions makers and policy matters.**

FINAL REMARKS AND CONCLUSION

Dr. Arnab Das, highlighted that there is still so much work to be done and governments cannot do it by itself. This is why, for example, other institutions specialized in data should complete the work done by INCOIS, as data will be required and be more and more mandatory to increase knowledge.

Mr. Shri Aditya Dash, mentioned that MPEDA would be interested to develop projects including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and possibly Myanmar, notably on small scale fishery, as the initiative NetFish.

Mrs. Hélène Djoufelkit, as takeaways, advised that **research plug to actions** to answer the demand for the industry and economic sectors. We need to think about what the missing links on demand are. There is also a need to **plug the research at the decisional level (budget and reform)**. **Dr. Djoufelkit concluded by proposition that experts should think towards a model gathering all the blue economy aspects.**

Jacky Amprou, mentioned a common goal: developing and promoting sustainable management of marine and fisheries resources. Sustainable management of marine resources needs to be combining with acceptable wait of return, when it comes to business; it is a precondition to track private funding. He recalled that **the AFD plays a catalytic role, which brings others investors to create a networking to work all together on solutions.** This idea was largely explored during the discussion.