Towards a blue future

Great Blue Wall

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

IUCN
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal and Objectives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Change</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Economy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Growing Partnership</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal and objectives

The Great Blue Wall is a Western Indian Ocean (WIO)-born, Africa-driven roadmap to achieve a nature-positive world by 2030. It aims at unlocking unprecedented nature-based recovery efforts through the establishment of a transformational movement. Its goal is to dramatically accelerate and upscale ocean conservation actions while enhancing socio-ecological resilience and the development of a regenerative blue economy by catalysing political leadership and financial support. This will be achieved by spearheading the establishment of a connected network of regenerative seascapes. This network of seascapes will be connected by a living blue wall that will act as a regional ecological corridor formed by conserved and restored critical blue ecosystems such as mangroves, seagrasses and corals. While the Great Blue Wall will act as a wall against climate change impacts and biodiversity loss, it will also shelter coastal communities and create the enabling conditions and necessary mechanisms to accelerate the development of a climate-nature-people positive ocean economy. The Great Blue Wall is an action-focused and action-driven regional response to 3 interconnected crises, i.e. Biodiversity - Climate - Economy with 3 clear objectives to be achieved by 2030.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biodiversity</th>
<th>Climate</th>
<th>Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectively and equitably conserve at least 30% of the Ocean by 2030, in a Nature and People positive way.</td>
<td>Conserve and restore critical blue ecosystems to achieve Net-gain by 2030 compared to 2020 and sequester at least 100 million tons of CO2.</td>
<td>Unlock the development of a regenerative blue economy that directly benefits 70 million people in coastal communities while also delivering conservation outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nature and People Positive Seascapes

These seascapes, otherwise referred to as Regenerative Seascapes, will be fairly governed and effectively conserved by countries in both national and international waters and will form a network of inclusive and productive (i.e. multiple, sustainable and artisanal uses) large-scale marine protected and conserved areas. They will meet international standards to ensure they deliver both socio-economic and conservation outcomes by promoting regenerative practices and sustainable use of natural resources that benefit local livelihoods.

Why is this important?

As per end of 2021, only 8% of our Oceans are formally protected, and only a small portion are effectively conserved. Yet, our oceans have never been in such state of degradation despite being the sources of life, resilience and livelihoods for more than 70 million people in the WIO region alone.

Time is of the essence

Science is clear - we need to protect effectively 30% of our oceans by 2030. With a few years left, the need for a clear roadmap and mechanism to achieve this target in a way that works for both nature and people has never been so critical.

Objective

By 2030 - the Great Blue Wall will fairly and effectively protect and conserve at least 2 million km² (30% of the WIO) and will advocate and provide support at continental and global levels to achieve complementary results.
Climate Change

To connect these seascapes at a regional level, the Great Blue Wall will regenerate and secure the integrity of an ecological corridor by conserving and restoring at scale marine and coastal critical ecosystems, such as mangroves, seagrasses, corals, coastal forests and parabolic dunes. This will be achieved by large-scale nature-based adaptation and mitigation measures, such as large-scale restoration efforts.

Blue Guardians

Local stakeholders, the first of which are indigenous people and local communities, will play a critical leading role in the effective management of the connected network and will be supported in their efforts to sustainably use and benefit from natural resources.

In a recent ground breaking paper*, world leaders promoted the adoption of a succinct Nature-Positive Global Goal for Nature. The goal has three measurable objectives: Zero Net Loss of Nature from 2020, Net Positive by 2030, and Full Recovery by 2050. Subsequently, a joint position paper by global leaders entitled the G7 2030 Nature Compact, recognizes that our world must not only become net zero, but also nature positive, for the benefit of both people and the planet, with a focus on promoting sustainable and inclusive development.


Objective

By 2030, the Great Blue Wall will achieve net-gain of critical blue ecosystems compared to 2020 by conserving and restoring at least 2 million ha of critical ecosystems in the WIO and sequester more than 100M tons of carbon. It will support the African continent and other regions engaged in equivalent efforts.
We Can’t Do This Alone
While we need to urgently address the climate change and biodiversity threats faced by our ocean, we need to do so while also supporting the development of local communities. It is therefore of paramount importance to transform our ocean economy into a driver of positive conservation and socio-economic outcomes. In other words, there is today an urgent need and unique opportunity to accelerate the development of a regenerative blue economy.

The graphic below shows clearly that there is a need for more early-stage investment (seed and venture capital), in particular within the “Death Valley”. The Great Blue Wall will unlock innovation, investment and transformational change at seascape, country and regional levels in order to overcome such “Death Valley” effect and support the establishment at scale of financially viable climate-ocean-people positive enterprises.

Because the blue economy sector is still nascent, a key challenge that considerably limits the possibility to unlock such potential is the lack of bankable projects. As the development of a blue economy gains traction, there is today a unique opportunity to support such development while making sure it is inclusive, resilient, and becomes a catalyst to achieve SDG 14.

Objective
By 2030, the Great Blue Wall will unlock regenerative livelihood opportunities for 70 million people in the WIO, create at least 2 million blue jobs and support the African continent and other regions engaged in equivalent efforts.
Stakeholders

Coastal Communities: Central stakeholders and stewards & key target beneficiaries

Governments: Champions of the GBW: high-level leaders, policy makers and enablers

Private Sector: Unlock blue investments and accelerate regenerative economic development

NGOs: Provide technical and capacity support

Donors: Provide technical and financial support

Governments

Private Sector

NGOs

Donors

Central Stakeholders and Stewards & Key Target Beneficiaries

Champions of the GBW: High-Level Leaders, Policy Makers and Enablers

Unlock Blue Investments and Accelerate Regenerative Economic Development

Provide Technical and Capacity Support

Provide Technical and Financial Support
A Growing Multi-Stakeholder Partnership

**African Governments** leading the initiative include the Union of Comoros, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Madagascar, the Republic of Mauritius, the Republic of Mozambique, the Republic of Seychelles, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

**Partner countries** that support the initiative include the Republic of France, Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Ireland, Republic of Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

**Multilateral Agencies** that are part of the initiative include the African Union Commission, the UNFCCC High Level Climate Champions, UNDP and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Nairobi Convention.


**Private Sector Organisations** supporting the initiative include Mitsubishi Foundation, World Economic Forum - UpLink, Societe Generale, Standard Chartered, Citibank and Climate Fund Managers.
People are rising faster than sea level!

Join The Movement!

For more information

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