

Blue Economy [UPSC GS 3]

With regards to economics, Blue Economy means the preservation of marine resources.

Although it has various definitions among organizations, its general term is used in the scope of international development regarding sustainable development of coastal resources.

These resources can include fisheries, maritime transport, aquaculture, marine tourism etc.

This article will give details about Blue Economy within the context of the UPSC Exams.

Definitions of Blue Economy

As mentioned before, Blue Economy has varied definitions according to different organizations

According to the World Bank blue economy is defined as “sustainable development of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.”

While the Commonwealth of Nations defines it as an emerging concept which encourages better stewardship of our ocean or 'blue' resources

A related term of blue economy is ocean economy but despite the two being used interchangeably they are different from each other. Ocean economy focuses on use of ocean resources and is aimed at empowering the economic system of the ocean. While the blue economy goes beyond viewing the ocean economy solely as a mechanism of economic growth

The other term is green economy where the economy is aimed at reducing environmental risks, and that aims for sustainable development without degrading the environment. It is closely related with ecological economics.

Therefore, the blue economy is a part of the green economy. During the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012, Pacific small island developing states stated that, for them, "a green economy was in fact a blue economy".

Facts about the Blue Economy

- The worldwide ocean economy is valued at around US\$1.5 trillion per year.
- Eighty per-cent of global trade by volume is carried by sea.
- 350 million jobs world-wide are linked to fisheries.
- By 2025 it is estimated that 34% of crude oil production will come from offshore fields.

- Aquaculture is the fastest growing food sector and provides about 50% of fish for human consumption.

India and the Blue Economy

There is much potential for India if it leverages on the blue economy. The Indian Ocean Region is abundant with resources, particularly in the sectors of fisheries, aquaculture, ocean energy, sea-bed mining and minerals, and provides tremendous economic opportunities to develop marine tourism and shipping activities.

- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report states that while other world oceans are nearing their fisheries limit, in certain areas, the Indian Ocean's resources have the potential to sustain increased production.
- The development of the Blue Economy can serve as a growth catalyst in realizing the vision to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2032. Additionally, the Indian Ocean Region is of strategic importance to India's economic growth as the most of the country's oil, and gas is imported through the sea.
- The Sagarmala project, launched by the Ministry of Shipping, is the strategic initiative for port-led development through the extensive use of IT enabled services for modernisation of ports. The additional benefit of this project is the development of Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs) which will be a catalyst for a thriving blue economy in India
- Under the Make in India program of the Government, the shipbuilding industry can benefit from a major thrust. This industry has a high multiplier effect on investment and can accelerate industrial growth along with its large number of associated industries.
- India has a National Fisheries policy for promoting 'Blue Growth Initiative' which focuses on sustainable utilization of fisheries wealth from the marine and other aquatic resources.

Way Forward for Indian on Blue Economy

The Indian Ocean region needs a sustainable and inclusive framework for international partnerships. Countries in the region need to not only coordinate and manage the growing security challenges in the region but also realize the substantial economic potential the Indian Ocean area presents. India has significantly upped its development efforts in

India's commitment to strengthen its cooperation with the regional partners and build a sustainable ocean economy aligns well with its domestic mega-modernisation projects that will enable the nation to harness the full potential of the Ocean based Blue Economy.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Blue Economy

What is the importance of a Blue Economy?

The Blue economy approach emphasized that ideas, principles, norms of Blue Economy lend significant contribution towards eradication of poverty, contributing to food and nutrition security, mitigation and adaptation of climate change and generation of sustainable and inclusive livelihoods.

As per the Indian context, what is the definition of Blue Economy?

India's blue economy is understood as a subset of the national economy comprising an entire ocean resources system and human-made economic infrastructure in marine, maritime, and onshore coastal zones within the country's legal jurisdiction.