

Tunis to host 2019 Africa Blue Economy Forum

Capital city of Tunisia, Tunis, will host the second Africa Blue Economy Forum (ABEF) set for 26 June this year. The annual event will bring together 150+ delegates from across the globe to discuss the potential of the blue economy to drive sustainable growth in Africa.



Mark Eddo, Yonov Agah, Paul Holthus and David Luke at ABEF2018.

Last year, during the forum's inauguration, speakers and delegates at ABEF2018 agreed on the need for innovative financing to start developing Africa's blue economy on a wider scale, involving not only governments but also the private sector. Building on these recommendations, ABEF2019 will have a strong focus on business and investment. Discussions will explore the opportunities and innovations in emerging and frontier sectors of the blue economy and how they can help accelerate Africa's transformation.

Potential to create jobs, sustain livelihoods

Africa's maritime industry is estimated at around \$1tn per year and the asset value of ocean economy ecosystems around \$24tn. The blue economy has a unique potential to create jobs, sustain livelihoods for local communities and offer low-cost impactful climate change adaptation solutions on the continent.

Leila Ben Hassen, founder and CEO of ABEF organiser Blue Jay Communication, said: "This year's forum is designed as an action-oriented platform aiming to create partnerships, facilitate investments and ultimately create jobs for Africa's youth while engaging more women in the blue economy value chain. I believe that today we cannot speak about growth if it is not sustainable and taking into consideration the social and environmental impact."

ABEF panel topics will include: public-private partnerships; fishing and aquaculture; ports and trade; ocean energy; governance and security; pollution and waste management; women empowerment; youth education and technology; and ocean financing.

Speakers confirmed include:

- Jacqueline Alder, Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Joshua Brien, Cooley LLP
- Manuel Castiano, World Wide Fund (WWF) Mozambique
- Bernhard Friess, Commission européenne
- Sanjeev Gupta, Africa Finance Corporation (AFC)
- Peter Hammarstedt, Sea Shepherd
- Paul Holthus, World Ocean Council (WOC)
- Dr Frannie Léautier, Trade & Development Bank (TDB)
- Marc Naidoo, Standard Chartered Bank
- Christian Neumann, GRID-Arendal
- Marta Marrero, The Nature Conservancy
- Torsten Thiele, The Global Ocean Trust

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