



**Workshop on Waves of Change:  
Advancing the Blue Economy Across Asia and the Pacific**  
*26-29 August 2025, Anchorage Room, Hilton Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand*

**Concept Note**

**I. Background and Overview**

1. **The Challenge.** Oceans and seas have long served as vital sources of economic opportunity and sustenance for communities around the globe. An estimated 3 billion people rely on ocean resources for their livelihoods, and approximately 40% of the world's population resides in coastal regions. The oceans support 80% of global trade, represent assets valued at over \$24 trillion, and generate goods and services worth \$2.5 trillion annually (Ranganathan et al., 205). Ocean-based industries encompass a wide range of sectors, including fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, maritime transport, and shipping.

2. However, these critical ecosystems are under increasing pressure from human activities that often prioritize short-term economic gains over environmental sustainability. The ongoing degradation of marine environments stems from overfishing, pollution, habitat destruction, and other harmful practices. At the same time, natural phenomena such as rising sea levels, ocean warming, acidification, and carbon accumulation in seabeds are intensifying the threats to ocean health. Together, these human and environmental factors pose significant risks to the future of ocean resources and the communities that depend on them.

3. **ADB Initiatives.** Strategic action is required to safeguard the oceans and the communities that depend on them. Recognizing the critical need to transition toward a sustainable blue economy, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) developed a comprehensive roadmap to reinforce mechanisms supporting ocean health and the blue economy. In 2019, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) launched the [Healthy Oceans Action Plan](#) to scale up investments and technical assistance aimed at protecting and restoring coastal and marine ecosystems, promoting inclusive livelihoods, fostering sustainable blue economies, building resilient coastal communities, and enhancing food security across Asia and the Pacific.

4. Since the launch of the action plan, ADB has allocated \$4 billion to ocean health initiatives through to the end of 2024 and is committed to increase investments toward investments and technical assistance in this domain by 2030. Through both [Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies](#), and the *Ocean Resilience and Coastal Adaptation Financing Partnership Facility*, ADB continues to support its member countries in advancing ocean health and fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water. The action plan is anchored on four key focus areas: sustainable blue economies, ecosystem management, pollution control, and resilient infrastructure. ADB also offers policy-based lending and targeted technical assistance at the country level to advance sustainable blue economy initiatives, including efforts to combat plastic pollution and marine debris.

5. Since 2023, ADB's technical assistance played a pivotal role in supporting the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) and the Indonesia–Malaysia–Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT). These subregional groupings

advanced blue economy development through capacity building and strategic planning. Aware of their shared maritime geographies, overlapping economic zones, and rich natural assets, BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT member countries are collaboratively aligning their initiatives with the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Blue Economy Framework*. This framework is underpinned by principles of stakeholder collaboration, local government participation, private sector engagement, cross-sectoral integration, and data-driven transformation.

6. In 2020, ADB approved Technical Assistance (TA) TA 6628<sup>1</sup> to promote inclusive, sustainable, and resilient intra- and inter-subregional cooperation and integration across Asia and the Pacific. Under Output 3—*Opportunities to Cooperate for Resilient and Sustainable Livelihoods in Atoll Nations*—the TA supported a study aimed at identifying opportunities and recommending actions to develop sustainable blue economies through regional cooperation. This initiative complemented ADB's *Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies*, with the study's findings intended to inform the design of future investment projects funded by ADB and development partners. The study examined the regional dimensions of sustainable blue economy (SBE) sectors across three participating Pacific atoll nations—Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu—and identified key opportunities for growth. It also produced three project concept notes to advance regional cooperation and integration (RCI) in targeted areas: blue public financial management; innovation and green maritime transport for rural island communities; and support for outer island fish centers and community-based fisheries management in atoll nations.

## II. Workshop Rationale and Learning Objectives

7. **Rationale.** ADB-supported initiatives in Southeast Asia and the Pacific have underscored the vital role of knowledge sharing, RCI, and inter-subregional collaboration in advancing the blue economy. These initiatives have generated a wealth of insights and practical approaches that inform the design and implementation of sustainable ocean-based economic strategies. Both regions—and their associated subregional cooperation frameworks—stand to benefit significantly from the lessons learned and experiences gained through the study, planning, and strategizing of blue economy initiatives.

8. In this context, the proposed 3.5-day workshop seeks to:

- i) Facilitate in-depth discussions and deepen participants' understanding of key issues, challenges, and opportunities related to the assessment, development, and implementation of blue economy initiatives across Asia and the Pacific region;
- ii) Explore possible pathways forward, including the identification of potential initiatives to advance the blue economy agenda; and
- iii) Strengthen networks among blue economy experts, policymakers, and practitioners from Southeast Asia and the Pacific to promote collaboration and knowledge exchanges.

## III. Target Participants

9. The workshop brings together middle- to senior-level officials responsible for blue economy-related issues from Southeast Asia and the Pacific. A total of 65 participants are expected to attend, with 5 participants for each of the participating countries in Southeast Asia

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<sup>1</sup> TA 6628: Promoting Innovations in Regional Cooperation and Integration in the Aftermath of COVID-19.

(Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam); the Pacific (Republic of Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, and Kiribati), and the People's Republic of China. Resource persons from ASEAN member countries such as Brunei Darussalam will also be invited. Prospective participants are expected to have responsibilities relating to various aspects of the blue economy and represent the ministries of transport, urban, agriculture, environment, and finance. Prospective participants should have deep knowledge of and experience in designing and implementing blue economy initiatives.

#### IV. Indicative Workshop Design, Content, and Schedule

10. The workshop will span 3.5 days, including a dedicated full-day field visit to blue economy sites in Auckland, New Zealand. Designed to be highly interactive, the sessions will encourage sharing of ideas and country experience through case studies, group discussions, and presentations. Facilitated brainstorming sessions will provide a platform for participants to explore key issues, share challenges and solutions, and exchange ideas with regional counterparts. The field visit will showcase institutions and enterprises in Auckland actively engaged in blue economy sectors—particularly fisheries, maritime transport, and pollution control. To conclude the workshop, an action planning session will guide participants in outlining the next steps and charting pathways for the identification and implementation of sustainable blue economy initiatives. An indicative program is provided below.

#### Indicative Workshop Program

##### Day 1: 26 August 2025 (Tuesday)

08:30-09:00	<b>On-site Registration</b>
09:00-10:00	<b>Opening Session</b> <b>Welcome Remarks</b> Yuebin Zhang, Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, Regional Cooperation and Integration and Trade Division (CCRC), Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department (CCSD), Asian Development Bank (ADB)  <b>Workshop Overview and Objectives</b> <i>Interactive session for participants to get to know each other, agree on learning, expectations and discuss the workshop overview and objectives.</i>  Facilitators: Pamela Asis-Layugan, Regional Cooperation Specialist, SERC, SERD, Jordana Queddeng-Cosme, Regional Development Analyst (Consultant), ADB B-I-G Program  <b>Group Photo (Staircase connecting Ground Floor and Level 1)</b>
10:00-10:15	<b>Tea/Coffee Break and Networking</b>
10:15-11:15	<b>Session 1.a: Setting the Scene: What is the Blue Economy and its Implications for ADB's Operations</b> <i>This session will examine the concept of the blue economy, providing a comprehensive overview of its various components, broader implications, and regional effects—particularly within Southeast Asia and the Pacific. It will also outline the Asian Development Bank's (ADB's) approach to regional cooperation and integration, with a focus on supporting sustainable blue economies and ocean health. The session will provide background relevant to the workshop in relation to ADB's initiatives to expand ocean-based climate action through its \$5 billion Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and other transformative solutions such as blue bonds, sustainable investments, and financing hubs intended to facilitate innovative funding, capacity building, and the development of bankable projects.</i>

	<p><b><u>Presentation: What is the Blue Economy?</u></b> Jonathan McCue, Maritime Strategy and Regional Cooperation Specialist, Cowater International New Zealand Ltd. (<i>virtual/online participation</i>)</p> <p><b><u>Presentation: ADB's Strategic Approach to Regional Cooperation and the Blue Economy</u></b> Yuebin Zhang, Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, CCRC, CCSD, ADB</p> <p><b><u>Open Discussion / Q&amp;A</u></b> Moderator: Wilhelmina T. Paz, Economist (Regional Cooperation), CCRC, CCSD, ADB</p>
<p>11:15-12:30</p> <p><i>Note: 20 mins for presentation (context setting and tool introduction), 40 mins country teams working session 15 mins for output finalization, gallery set up and reflection</i></p>	<p><b><u>Session 1.b: Country Team Discussions and Exercises: Analyzing Blue Economy Commitments and Country Assessment</u></b></p> <p><i>This session explores global blue economy commitments and their alignment with national priorities using the Scorecard and Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) Framework. Participants will identify gaps and opportunities for sustainable ocean initiatives, assess country progress against the ADB Ocean Finance Framework, and develop standardized outputs for gallery display to foster peer learning and cross-country exchange.</i></p> <p><i>All country outputs will be displayed on a dedicated wall, serving as a gallery to showcase each country's work. Standardized templates will be provided for uniformity. Participants will be invited to view the country outputs during the lunch break.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitator: Melody Ovenden, Senior Environment Specialist, Climate Change, Resilience, and Environment Cluster (CCRE), CCSD, ADB</p> <p>Small group and breakout facilitators: Pamela Asis-Layugan; Wilhelmina Paz; Sophia Noreen Castillo-Plaza, Senior Operations Officer (Resource Planning), SERC, SERD; Melanie Joy Pre, Associate Operations Officer, CCRC, CCSD; Jordana Queddeng-Cosme; and Claire Ann Odsinada, TA Coordinator, (Consultant), CCSD</p>
12:30-14:00	<b><u>Lunch Break</u></b>
<p>14:00-15:00</p> <p><i>Note: 30 mins for presentation and 30 mins open discussion</i></p>	<p><b><u>Session 2.a: Fisheries and Aquaculture</u></b> <i>This session will showcase ecosystem management within the blue economy, focusing on its implications for fisheries and aquaculture. It will examine prevailing trends and developments, including coastal management practices, and feature good practices and case studies from Southeast Asia and the Pacific. It will also outline ADB-supported blue economy initiatives in fisheries and aquaculture, providing context for knowledge sharing on established practices and project experiences.</i></p> <p><b><u>Presentation: Trends and Developments in Fisheries and Aquaculture</u></b> Jonathan Turner, Co-Founder and Director at NLA International (<i>virtual/online participation</i>)</p> <p><b><u>Presentation: ADB's Initiatives in Fisheries and Aquaculture</u></b> Alvin Lopez, Principal Operations Coordination Specialist, CCRE, CCSD, ADB (<i>virtual/online participation</i>)</p> <p><b><u>Open Discussion and Synthesis:</u></b></p>

	<p><i>The presentation will be followed by an open and moderated discussion and a summary of key points and learnings.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Melody Ovenden, Senior Environment Specialist, CCRE, CCSD, ADB</p>
15:00-15:30	<b>Tea/Coffee Break and Networking</b>
15:30-17:00	<p><b>Session 2.b</b>  <b>Learning Exercises and Discussions:</b>  <i>After the presentation, participants will discuss potential initiatives aimed at supporting fisheries and aquaculture development, cross-border cooperation in blue economy strategies, and identifying investment opportunities. Guide questions and templates will be provided.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitator: Melody Ovenden, Senior Environment Specialist, CCRE, CCSD, ADB</p> <p>Small group and breakout facilitators: Duncan McIntosh, Pamela Asis-Layugan, Wilhelmina Paz, Sophia Noreen Castillo-Plaza, Melanie Joy Pre, Jordana Queddeng-Cosme, and Claire Ann Odsinada</p>
17:00-17:15	<p><b>Wrap up and Announcements</b>  <i>Short interactive exercise to wrap up day 1 and highlight important points discussed in the day. Guidance will be given on activities for Day 2.</i></p> <p>Facilitators: Pamela Asis Layugan and Jordana Queddeng-Cosme</p>

## Day 2: 27 August 2025 (Wednesday)

08:30-09:00	<b>On-site Registration</b>
09:00-10:30	<p><b>Session 3: Green Maritime Transport</b>  <i>The session will start with a presentation outlining trends and practices, including ADB-supported initiatives, in green maritime transport, green ports, green shipping, clean energy, and innovations in green transport. The presentation is intended to provide background for knowledge sharing on current practices and project experiences on green maritime transport and its relation to the blue economy.</i></p> <p><b>Presentation: Overview of Maritime Sector</b>  Roel Hoenders, Head, Climate Action and Clean Air, Marine Environment Division, International Maritime Organization (<i>virtual/online participation</i>)</p> <p><b>Presentation: Green Maritime Transport in ADB Operations</b>  Duncan McIntosh, Senior Regional Maritime Specialist, Sectors Department 1, Transport Sector Office, ADB</p> <p><b>Learning Exercises and Discussions:</b>  <i>After the presentation, participants will subsequently discuss potential initiatives aimed at supporting green maritime transport development, cross-border cooperation to support maritime decarbonization and other related blue economy areas in maritime transport and identify investment opportunities. Guide questions and templates will be provided.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitator: Duncan McIntosh, Senior Regional Maritime Specialist, Sectors Department 1, Transport Sector Office, ADB</p>

	Small group and breakout facilitators: Melody Ovenden, Alvin Lopez, Pamela Asis-Layugan, Wilhelmina Paz, Sophia Noreen Castillo-Plaza, Melanie Joy Pre, Jordana Queddeng-Cosme, and Claire Ann Odsinada
10:30-11:00	<b>Tea/Coffee Break and Networking</b>
11:00-12:30 <i>Note:</i> 30 mins presentation 45 mins exercises 15 mins short presentations (select countries)	<p><b>Session 4: Pollution Control and Management</b>  <i>The session will highlight key issues and good practices in pollution control and management within the context of the blue economy. It will feature ADB-supported initiatives in solid waste management, sanitation, wastewater treatment, and pollution prevention, with an emphasis on their transboundary implications. Case studies of ADB projects will offer concrete examples to support knowledge sharing on current practices and project implementation in this priority blue economy sector.</i></p> <p><b><u>Presentation: Pollution Control and Management: Recent Developments and New Initiatives</u></b>  Jonathan McCue, Maritime Strategy and Regional Cooperation Specialist, Cowater International New Zealand Ltd. (virtual/online participation)</p> <p><b><u>Presentation: Pollution Control and Management: ADB's Initiatives</u></b>  Terry Cho, Senior Urban Development Specialist, Sectors Department 2, Water and Urban Development Sector Office, ADB</p> <p><b><u>Learning Exercises and Discussions:</u></b>  <i>Following the presentation, participants will engage in discussions to identify potential initiatives that promote transboundary pollution control, strengthen cross-border cooperation in marine debris and plastics management and other related blue economy priorities, and explore investment opportunities. Guide questions and templates will be provided to facilitate the discussions.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitator: Terry Cho, Senior Urban Development Specialist, Sectors Department 2, Water and Urban Development Sector Office</p> <p>Small group and breakout facilitators: Melody Ovenden, Alvin Lopez, Duncan McIntosh, Pamela Asis-Layugan, Wilhelmina Paz, Sophia Noreen Castillo-Plaza, Melanie Joy Pre, Jordana Queddeng-Cosme, and Claire Ann Odsinada.</p>
12:30-14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>
14:00-15:00 <i>Note: maximum of 30-40 mins per presentation and 20 mins open discussions</i>	<p><b>Session 5: Financing Blue Economy Initiatives</b>  <i>The session will present various ADB financing modalities available to support blue economy initiatives. It will highlight how developing member countries, local government units, and business enterprises can access and utilize these financing options. Real-world examples and case studies from ADB's portfolio on blue financing will also be shared to illustrate practical applications and impact.</i></p> <p><b><u>Presentation: Financing Blue Initiatives</u></b>  Andreas Thermann, Senior Infrastructure Specialist, Green Finance Unit Hub, ADB</p> <p><b><u>Presentation: ADB's Sustainable and Resilient Maritime Fund</u></b>  Duncan McIntosh, Senior Regional Maritime Specialist, Sectors Department 1, Transport Sector Office, ADB</p> <p><b><u>Open Discussion and Synthesis:</u></b>  <i>The presentation will be followed by an open and moderated discussion and a summary of key points and learnings.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Yuebin Zhang</p>



15:00-15:30	<b>Tea/Coffee Break and Networking</b>
15:30-16:30  <i>Note: 45 mins presentation and 15 mins open discussions</i>	<p><b>Session 6: Natural Capital Accounting for Blue Economy</b>  <i>The session will delve into natural capital accounting (NCA) in Asia and the Pacific, focusing on how the value of natural resources can be integrated into policy and economic decision-making. It will introduce key methodologies for quantifying the stocks and flows of natural assets and estimating their economic value and contributions. Examples of natural assets covered can include water, forests, and biodiversity.</i></p> <p><b>Presentation: Natural Capital Accounting</b>  Prof. Md Sayed Iftekhhar, Associate Professor, Griffith University, Australia  Ms. Lan Le, Environmental Economist, Agriculture, Food, Nature, and Rural Development Sector Office, SD2, ADB (<i>virtual/online participation</i>)</p> <p><b>Open Discussion and Q&amp;A:</b>  Moderator: Wilhelmina Paz</p>
16:30-17:15	<p><b>Wrap up and Announcements</b>  <i>Short interactive exercise to wrap up day 2 and highlight important points discussed in the day.</i></p> <p>Facilitators: Pamela Asis Layugan and Jordana Queddeng-Cosme</p> <p><b>Technical Field Visit Briefing and Guidelines</b>  <i>Participants will receive an orientation on the field visit sites, along with a set of guide questions to frame their observations. They will be grouped into multi-country teams and tasked with preparing a lessons-learned presentation to be delivered on Day 4.</i></p> <p>Facilitators: Theresa Canlas, Sustainable Development Manager, Cowater International New Zealand Ltd.  Pamela Asis Layugan and Jordana Queddeng-Cosme</p>

### Day 3: 28 August 2025 (Thursday)

07:30-08:00	<b>Assembly at the Hotel Lobby to depart at 08:00</b>
08:00-08:30	<b>Departure and Travel to Ports of Auckland (POAL)</b>
08:30-10:30	<p><b>Technical Field Visits:</b>  <b>Blue Economy Innovations and Solutions in New Zealand in POAL</b></p> <p><i>This technical visit will spotlight leading institutions driving Auckland's blue economy transformation. Participants will explore the Ports of Auckland's strategic evolution—from tourism and container shipping to its pioneering role in ecosystem restoration and pollution control. Highlights include green transport technologies such as hydrogen fuel and electric tugboats, and insights into Port of Auckland's efforts to achieve net-zero emissions and sustainable marine operations.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitator: Theresa Canlas</p>
10:30-12:30	<b>Travel to Waipu</b>
12:30- 14:00	<b>Lunch at the Cove</b>

14:00- 14:20	<b>Travel to Earth Sciences Bream Bay Facility</b>
14:20- 16:30	<p><b><u>Technical Field Visits:</u> Blue Economy Innovations and Solutions in New Zealand in Earth Sciences Bream Bay Facility</b></p> <p><i>The technical visit will also include the Earth Sciences Bream Bay Facility, showcasing fisheries and aquaculture innovations. Select participants will experience a short electric boat ride with Naut, offering a hands-on look at emerging solutions for inter-island connectivity and small-scale aquaculture. A briefing will be provided on Naut's new electric ferry initiative in Samoa.</i></p>
16:30 – 17:00	<b>Assembly for Departure to Hilton Hotel and depart at 17:00</b>
17:00 – 19:00	<b>Travel to Hilton Hotel and expected arrival at 19:00</b>

#### Day 4: 29 August 2025 (Friday)

08:00-08:15	<b>On-site Registration</b>
08:15-09:15	<p><b>Session 7</b></p> <p><b><u>Exercise and Discussions:</u> Lessons Learned from the Site Visits</b></p> <p><i>Participants in an interactive exercise will be requested to summarize (in learning teams) key takeaways in the technical field visits.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitators: Pamela Asis Layugan and Jordana Queddeng-Cosme</p>
09:00-10:15  <i>Note: 30 mins (three lightning presentations at 10 minutes each) followed by moderated open discussion and audience participation</i>	<p><b>Session 8: Knowledge Sharing with Development Partners: Pathways to a Sustainable Blue Economy</b></p> <p><i>This panel explores the evolving landscape of the blue economy through the lenses of national strategies, cutting-edge research, sustainability innovation, international policy, and Indigenous knowledge systems. From the strategic planning and implementation experience of the Republic of Korea to tribal-led aquaculture initiatives in Aotearoa, New Zealand, the session will examine how diverse approaches—from national frameworks to community-driven projects—are shaping the future of ocean-based economies.</i></p> <p><i>Panelists will share insights from government initiatives, academic research, Indigenous-led enterprises, and sustainability ventures, offering a rich tapestry of perspectives on how to build inclusive, regenerative, and resilient marine economies.</i></p> <p><b><u>Presentations and Panel Discussion:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>From Policy to Practice: The Republic of Korea's Journey in the Blue Economy</b>  Bumjun Shin, Chief International Cooperation Officer, Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries, Republic of Korea  <i>The presentation will provide a comprehensive overview of Korea's national strategy, including policy frameworks, budgeting, innovation in fisheries, aquaculture and marine pollution</i> </li> <li> <b>Reimagining the Blue Economy: Indigenous Innovation and Sustainable Futures</b>  Jason Mika, Professor, Business School, Management and International Business and Associate Dean, Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Auckland  <i>The presentation will feature the latest academic research on sustainable blue economies, emphasizing Indigenous innovation, entrepreneurship, and systems thinking.</i> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Investing in Regeneration: Scaling Impact in the Blue Economy</b> Cerasela Stancu, Sustainability Director, Envirostrat <i>The presentation will discuss Envirostrat's work in marine spatial planning, impact ventures, and the Ocean Regeneration Aotearoa Trust, focusing on financing and evaluation strategies.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Open Discussion and Synthesis:</b> <i>The presentation will be followed by an open and moderated discussion and a summary of key points and learnings.</i></p> <p>Co-moderators: Melody Ovenden and Pamela Asis-Layugan</p>
<b>10:15-10:30</b>	<b>Tea/Coffee Break and Networking</b>
10:30-12:30	<p><b>Session 9: Action Planning and Next Steps</b> <i>The integration exercise will consolidate outputs from Days 1 to 3, encouraging participants to reflect on key insights and explore strategic pathways moving forward. It will identify potential blue economy investments in the three priority sectors that ADB could support, discuss opportunities to harness regional cooperation in the blue economy, and facilitate discussion on practical actions and measures participants can implement in their respective countries.</i></p> <p>Lead Facilitator: Pamela Asis-Layugan</p> <p>Small group and breakout facilitators: Melody Ovenden, Alvin Lopez, Duncan McIntosh, Terry Cho, Andreas Thermann, Pamela Asis-Layugan, Wilhelmina Paz, Sophia Noreen Castillo-Plaza, Melanie Joy Pre, Jordana Queddeng-Cosme, and Claire Ann Odsinada</p>
12:30-14:00	<p><b>Evaluation Form</b></p> <p><b>Closing Session and Graduation Lunch</b> Closing Remarks by Yuebin Zhang <i>Awarding of Certificates of Participation</i></p>