

Blue Economy – Status and Future Growth

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Key words: Capacity building; Coastal Zone Management; Hydrography; Land management; Marine cadastre; Spatial planning

SUMMARY

Recent initiatives have identified the benefits and potential for completing up to date and relatively high accuracy seabed surveys to provide a base line data set in support of developing a sustainable economy from the oceans.

Europe has identified numerous priority areas or themes for their Horizon 2020 initiative and economic development of the ocean areas has a high profile. Other nations and regions are also considering this important sector.

So where are we generally in terms of a managed and sustainable economy derived from our oceans and seas? There appears to be considerable differences around the world and across the seas which could impact on how and to what extent development of a “Blue Economy” can be successfully implemented and sustained.

Some examples of current initiatives and activities offer an insight on what progress is being made.

International organizations and NGO’s have a part to play in promoting and encouraging national and regional planners to include the coastal zone, seas and oceans in a more holistic and inclusive manner such that Blue Growth can be achieved and maintained to the benefit of the coastal communities and the wider stakeholder populations.

This paper will not answer all of these points but rather offer some insight and discussion as to how the Blue Economy could develop in association with Blue Growth to achieve the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal no. 14: “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” and its 10 associated targets.