

Demands and Dispossession: **A REPORT ON** **BLUE ECONOMY**



Demands and Dispossession: A Report on Blue Economy

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Published by: Centre for Financial Accountability R21, South Extension Part 2, New Delhi-110049

Website: www.cenfa.org Email: info@cenfa.org

December 2023

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Introduction

The blue economy is the next economic frontier. That's the impression which has been created by the intergovernmental bodies and international financial institutions. National governments, business groups and private investors have also jumped into the bandwagon. The oceans are increasingly seen as spaces that need to be opened and developed in order to provide opportunities for economic growth in the coming future. What needs to be recorded is that this economic roadmap to capture the oceanscape is drawn from a logic of environmental protection and conservation, particularly in the name of addressing the Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG14) or 'Life Under Water'. In the next decade, the economic activities in and around the oceans is estimated to generate USD 3-6 trillion wealth and 40 million jobs, thus making the ocean economy the world's seventh largest (see [here](#) and [here](#)). Given the use of the term 'frontier', the blue economy, as scholars have [pointed out](#), demands the closure of spatial frontiers and opening up of new regulatory and ethical frontiers to generate a cycle of opportunity and dispossession. The dominant view of the oceanscape, backed by big capital inflows, that revolves around exploring and celebrating the economic and financial potential of the oceans thus simultaneously suppresses the voices of those who have traditionally viewed, depended and accessed the oceans and coasts as commons.

India is not outside the blue economy hullabaloo. About [4 million fisherpeople](#) are dependent on the coastal economy and the blue economy [contributes](#) to 4.1 percent of the country's GDP. Over the last decade in particular, the Government of India has therefore undertaken a series of policy decisions to boost economic activities around the oceans. New ports are built and rebuilt, industrial corridors and coastal economic zones are set up, beach resorts are constructed for ocean tourism, large scale fishing and deep sea mining are being encouraged. What is happening to the small-scale fisherpeople and those who have been traditionally dependent on the coastal ecosystem, what is happening to the spaces which are considered commons, and who are now the masters of the seas? These questions seem to be eclipsed behind the rhetoric of economic growth and sustainability. This report aims to understand the blue economy model and its implications for the frontline communities, and document the stories of dispossession, the grabbing of the natural resources and degradation of the marine ecosystems done by the blue economy programmes.

Objectives

The concept of the blue economy is a little more than a decade old and is still largely alien to the people. The idea germinated in the academic-entrepreneurial circles of the Global North, was actively promoted by global capital and was formalized by financial institutions in intergovernmental and international business summits. In India, particularly during the country's G20 presidency, the publication of multiple explainers on the blue economy ([here](#) and [here](#)) testified to the fact that this new economic and financial concept is still unknown to the people. Most of these explainers, released for popular consumption, have

elucidated the concept exclusively from the perspectives of the international financial institutions, intergovernmental and government documents, and reports released by corporate-funded policy advocacy groups and civil society organizations. The bulk of the emerging literature on the blue economy in India focuses on the potential, promises and prospects of this economic model of development (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). What seems to be missing in most of the existing literature on the subject are the perspectives of the frontline people, particularly the coastal and fishing communities. In response to the dominant understanding, a critical literature on the blue economy is emerging, particularly from the academia and activist-think tanks, that prioritizes people over profits (see [here](#) and [here](#)). Drawing upon these alternative perspectives, this report is an attempt to understand the blue economy in India within the larger global context and explain the same as lucidly as possible to a lay interested reader. The objectives of the report are:

- (a) unpack the concept of the blue economy;
- (b) understand the financial architecture of the blue economy; and
- (c) demonstrate the impact of blue economy projects on fishing and coastal natural resources-based communities

Methodology

Methodologically, the report is based on qualitative research that aims to underscore the perspectives of the frontline communities, fisherfolks and coastal people, who have been negatively impacted by the blue economy projects in India. The information presented in the report has been collected from secondary literature and data sources on the subject. These include government reports, publications of financial institutions (such as the multilateral development banks), reports of research and policy advocacy organizations, academic journals and newspaper reports. Conversations with members of the multiple grassroots organizations such as National Fishworkers' Forum, National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers, Sagar Shakti, Maharashtra Small Scale Traditional Fish Worker's Union, and Purba Medinipur Matsyajivi Forum, have been instrumental in understanding the perspectives of the people who are at the receiving end of the blue economy program. The *International Jury Verdict on The Independent People's Tribunal on the Implications of the Blue Economy in East and West Coast of India* was also consulted during preparation of this report (See Annexure I).

What is the blue economy?

The blue economy, broadly speaking, is a relatively new concept in the world of finance that refers to a range of economic activities related to the oceanscape which are aimed at the sustainable management of coasts and marine resources for financial growth, generation of jobs, and conservation of maritime environment. The key actors interested in this emerging economy are national governments, intergovernmental institutions, multilateral development banks and private sector investors. The fishing

and coastal resources-based communities, who have been traditionally an integral part of the oceanscape, are now at the receiving end of this new economic agenda. In other words, the blue economy is an emerging [business model](#) around the oceans.

There is [no consensus](#) on the definition of the expression ‘blue economy’. The lack of a common definition has left the term open to interpretation by different actors who tailor it to serve their own economic interests. The regulation of the oceanscape started with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982 and has intensified over the next decades. In 2008, a [joint publication](#) of the World Bank and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) drew the attention to the fisheries sector justifying the need for financialization and commercialization of the same. The term ‘blue economy’, however, was [conceptualized](#) as “a new economic and social model” by economist and entrepreneur Gunter Pauli in a report presented to the Club of Rome in 2009. In this report titled *The Blue Economy: 10 Years, 100 Innovations, 100 Million Jobs* (2010), Pauli [defined](#) the blue economy as “the regeneration of ecosystems in a logic of abundance and autonomy.” In 2010, the International Seabed Authority [called](#) the oceans a “new frontier.” In the international institutional stage, the concept was [articulated for the first time](#) in the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in 2012. The blue economy, as a [paper](#) from the Rio+20 conference explains, conceptualizes oceans as “Development Spaces” where “spatial planning integrates conservation, sustainable use, oil and mineral wealth extraction, bioprospecting, sustainable energy production and marine transport.” The blue economy was ideated as an advancement of the concept of green economy. The idea of connecting oceans with green economy was further [promoted](#) by UN agencies such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Maritime Organisation (IMO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and others.

Over the years, the concept was [further developed and refined](#) in various events such as the Our Oceans Conference 2014, Sustainable Blue Economy Conference in Nairobi in 2018, Economist Conference 2019, and by various international institutions, multilateral forums, and national governments in their reports and policy documents (see a list of key events [here](#)). BRICS, for instance, uses an alternative term viz. ocean economy. Another frequently used term is coastal economy. At present, the United Nations [describes](#) the blue economy as “an economic term linked to exploitation and conservation of the maritime environment” and underscores the need for sustainable management of marine ecosystems. The [World Bank](#) defines it as the “sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health.” According to the World Bank, the [concept](#) “seeks to promote economic growth, social inclusion, and the preservation or improvement of livelihoods while at the same time ensuring environmental sustainability of the oceans and coastal areas.” Such a conceptualization of the blue economy, like the other aforementioned definitions, is fraught with inherent contradictions. On the one hand, there is a stated agenda of global capital that promotes ocean-oriented economic growth, while on the other, there is a promise of protecting the environment.

Scholars have pointed out that the neoliberal economic models such as the ‘green economy’ and ‘blue economy’ are based on “false solutions” (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). These scholars demonstrated that the activities undertaken with the purpose of economic growth (such as extraction of natural resources) cannot be decoupled from their negative environmental impacts. Therefore, the idea of economic growth while ensuring environmental sustainability is an illusion (see [here](#) and [here](#)). The promise of blue growth is no exception. There are multiple examples from across the world (such as countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia, Turkey and Ghana) which demonstrate how the fishing and coastal communities (such as small-scale fishers, processors, traders, and other coast-dependent people) are bearing the brunt of the blue economy business model (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). The traditional natural resource-based communities, scholars and experts have shown, are increasingly encountering the threat of dispossession, loss of livelihood, environmental hazards and economic losses as the blue economy giants are now [occupying the coasts](#).

The Components of Blue Growth and Blue Fix

The blue economy has [diverse components](#) and includes a range of activities (see Table 1 for details). These activities include industries such as maritime transportation, extraction of seabed minerals and ocean resources, marine energy generation, waste management, sustainable tourism, fishing and environment conservation. According to international organizations and financial institutions (see [here](#) and [here](#)), these activities are meant for what is now popular as blue growth and blue fix. While blue growth refers to a neoliberal financial promise, the idea of blue fix is advocated under the garb of sustainable environmental concerns or food sovereignty. To fix the pressing issues such as the impact of climate change, or growing need for healthy food and nutrition, or demand for renewable energy, the [neoliberal establishment](#) is increasingly pushing for regulation of oceans as well as encouraging more public and private investments in the marine ecosystem and its associated industries. A plethora of industries around the oceans such as shipping and related infrastructure and services, mining and minerals, fisheries and aquaculture, energy, technology, tourism, pharmaceuticals and chemicals, among others are now part of the neoliberal blue revolution and the agenda of blue growth. As a consequence of these commercial activities and financialization of the oceanscape, the rights over commons and livelihoods of fishing communities, who are traditionally dependent on the coasts and seas for ages, are increasingly threatened.

Table 1: Components of the blue economy

Type of Activity	Ocean Service	Industry	Drivers of Growth
Harvest of living resources	Seafood	Fisheries	Food Security
		Aquaculture	Demand for Protein
	Marine biotechnology	Pharmaceuticals, chemicals	R&D for healthcare and industry
Extraction of non-living resources, generation of new resources	Minerals	Seabed mining	Demand for minerals
	Energy	Oil and Gas	Demand for alternative energy sources
		Renewables	
Fresh water	Desalination	Demand for fresh water	
Commerce and trade in and around the ocean	Transport and trade	Shipping	Growth in seaborne trade; International regulations
		Port infrastructure and services	
	Tourism and recreation	Tourism	Growth of global tourism
		Coastal Development	Coastal urbanization
	Domestic regulations		
Response to ocean health challenges	Ocean monitoring and surveillance	Technology and R&D	R&D in ocean technologies
	Carbon Sequestration	Blue Carbon	Growth in coastal and ocean protection and conservation activities
	Coastal protection		
	Waste Disposal		

Source: ‘Oceans 2030 - Financing the Blue Economy for Sustainable Development’, World Bank (see [here](#))

The Architecture of Blue Finance: A Global Perspective

The blue economy, as mentioned above, conceives oceans as “[the next economic frontier](#)”. Since the inception of the concept therefore, there has been a push to develop an economic and financial system that channels funds and encourages investments into ocean-related activities. This channeling of financial flows to the ‘management’ of the oceanscape by the financial behemoths is what is called blue finance. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) [defines](#) blue finance as “investments dedicated to finance or refinance activities that contribute to oceans.” Furthermore, the IFC describes this mode of financing as an “emerging area in climate finance” that “offers tremendous opportunities to help safeguard our access to clean water, protect underwater environments and invest in a sustainable water economy.” In other words, the call is for more investments to ensure blue growth and enable blue fix. According to the [World Economic Forum](#), the ocean “requires urgent investment to curb rising threats such as the climate crisis, pollution and unsustainable fishing” for which USD 175 billion per year is needed to achieve SDG14, i.e. Life Under Water, by 2030. The UNCTAD’s Trade and Environment Review 2023 [estimates](#) that the ocean economy is worth USD 3-6 trillion and about 3 billion people are dependent on the oceans globally. In 2023, Morgan Stanley [noted](#) that the blue economy will require an investment of USD 3 trillion in the coming decades. This [includes](#) investments in decarbonisation of marine transportation (USD 1.2 trillion), conservation of marine ecosystems (USD 1.1 trillion), marine renewable energy (USD 840 billion) and sustainable aquaculture (USD 225 billion). Moreover, a recent report of the UNCTAD [maps](#) the growth of ocean-based industries. The global export value of ocean-based goods in 2020, for example, was USD 1.3 trillion. The seaweed market has grown from USD 4.5 billion in 2000 to USD 16.5 billion in 2020. The total value of the traded plastic substitutes in 2020 globally is USD 388 billion. The aforesaid UNCTAD [report](#) also notes that compared to other SDGs, the SDG14 (Life Below Water) has received only 1.6 per cent of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) between 2013-2018. Being the least funded SDG, the UNCTAD has identified the oceans as the new direction of investment. For instance, it is [estimated](#) that an investment of USD 2.8 trillion today in “sustainable ocean solutions” will generate net benefits of USD 15.5 trillion by 2050.

To achieve these ambitious estimates, new financial instruments have been institutionalized to fund the blue economies across the globe, particularly in the Small Island Developing States such as Seychelles and Barbados. Broadly speaking, other than government investments, there are [three types of investments](#) that are noticeable in the blue economy: (a) venture capital firms (interested in circular economy, use of marine resources and technology); (b) public equity (funds dedicated to SDG14); and (c) blue bonds and loans. The two major financial instruments that fund projects and programmes which propose to have a positive impact on the ocean economy are blue loans and blue bonds. For instance, the World Bank started a multi-donor trust fund viz. the [PROBLUE](#) with the objective of supporting SDG 14. Similarly, the [Blue Finance Guidance Framework](#) of the IFC refers to SDGs 6 and 14, as well as, activities under SDGs 2, 7, 12, 13 and 15. In 2022, the IFC, the International Capital Markets

Association (ICMA), United Nations Global Compact, United Nations Environment Program Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) [collaborated](#) to support the blue economy and lay down the principles for issuance of blue bonds.

The IFC defines [blue loan](#) as one “that is aligned to the Green Loan Principles and where the proceeds are exclusively dedicated to finance or refinance activities that contribute to oceans protection and/or improved water management.” Similarly, a [blue bond](#) is a “fixed income instrument that is aligned to the Green Bond Principles and where the proceeds are exclusively dedicated to finance or refinance activities that contribute to oceans protection and/or improved water management.” The World Bank [calls](#) a blue bond “a debt instrument issued by governments, development banks or others to raise capital from impact investors to finance marine and ocean-based projects that have positive environmental, economic and climate benefits.” It is a [subset](#) of Green Bonds and are issued following the Green Bond Principles.

Several [initiatives](#) have been undertaken in the last decade to set the guidelines and principles of blue finance. These include: the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles ([here](#)), the UN Blue Bond Initiative ([here](#) and [here](#)), the EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities ([here](#)), the BlueInvest ([here](#)) and the guidelines of the Platform for Sustainable Finance Technical Working Group ([here](#)). In 2022, the G20 under the presidency of Indonesia launched a blended blue finance programme called the [Blue Halo](#) that aimed at both public, philanthropic and private investments. The UNCTAD’s Trade and Environment Review 2023, has [floated the idea of a ‘Blue Deal’](#) to invest in the sectors (such as seaweed farming and plastics substitutes).

The blue economy, as Table 1 shows, is a mix of a wide range of industries. Given the stated objective of sustainability in blue finance, various sectors interested or involved in the blue economy required new regulations. For instance, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) issued new regulations in 2023 ([here](#)) to curb greenhouse gas emissions for new and existing ships. Other guidelines such as the [Poseidon Principles](#) also regulate this industry in terms of funding and transparency. Similarly, initiatives such as sustainability-linked loans and bonds ([here](#)) or Fishery Improvement Project ([here](#)) have been put in place to encourage big corporations to invest in the blue economy.

Some of the key institutions which are financing the different sectors under the blue economy are as follows: Asian Development Bank ([multi-sector](#)), BDO Unibank Inc ([multi-sector](#)), KEXIM Bank ([maritime transportation](#)), BRK Ambiental Região Metropolitana de Maceió S.A ([wastewater](#)), and the Thai Union ([Aquaculture and Fisheries](#)). Funds are also flowing into the sectors through non-profit organizational initiatives such as the Nature Conservancy’s NatureVest program ([here](#)), the Marine Stewardship Council’s Ocean Impact Fund ([here](#)), Blue Revolution Fund ([here](#)) and Aqua Spark ([here](#)). Moreover, [companies and philanthropic organizations](#) such as the Ocean Foundation, Ocean14, the

Packard Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation have been investing in the blue economy. To sum up, there is an increased interest among different types of investors to pump in their money in the blue economy with a singular motive of generating profits out of the oceanscape.

Blue Economy in India

India, being a peninsular country having a coastline of 7517 kilometers and 1382 islands, is an active and enthusiastic participant in the blue economy agenda of global capital. This is evident from the Prime Minister's following statement made in 2015 where he said, "To me the Blue Chakra or the wheel in India's National Flag represents the potential of Blue Revolution or the Ocean Economy. That is how central the ocean economy is to us." The country's blue economy is [defined](#) as "as a subset of the national economy comprising of the entire system of ocean resources and man-made economic infrastructure in marine, maritime and the onshore coastal zones within India's legal jurisdiction, which aid in the production of goods and services and have clear linkages with economic growth, environmental sustainability and national security."

In India, the regulation of coastal areas [started](#) in 1981 when the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) issued guidelines for the management of coasts and beaches. In the same year, the Department of Ocean Development was [established](#) and was later renamed as the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES). A decade later, the coastal regulation zones (CRZ) were notified in 1991 under the Environment Protection Act, 1986. Based on this notification, a landmark judgment by the Supreme Court of India in 1996, led to the establishment of Coastal Zone Management Authorities (CZMA), both at the national and state levels. In the next decades, however, [as Jesu Rethinam and Siddharth Chakravarty have shown](#), two major policy-making issues were noticed: (a) insufficient fund allocation to CZMAs and inadequate or zero representation of the coastal communities in these bodies; and (b) a series of dilution of laws vis-a-vis coastal regulations to pave the road for big development projects (for example, the CRZ 2011 notification).

Since 2014, there has been a fresh impetus to boost the blue economy in India. A series of policy and vision documents were published to lay the foundation for India's blue growth agenda, viz. Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 ([here](#)), Vision for India 2030 ([here](#)), Maritime India Vision 2030 by Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways ([here](#)), the Draft Maritime Policy by NITI Aayog, India's Blue Economy-A Draft Policy Framework by Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister ([here](#)), and the ADB Report on Promotion of Coastal Shipping in India ([here](#)). There have also been attempts to further dilute the laws, commercialize and corporatise the coasts through the launch of a series of projects and programmes. In 2014, for example, the [Sailesh Nayak Committee](#) was appointed to review the CRZ

2011 notification and the report of this committee made several recommendations to relax the previous provisions with the aim of boosting tourism and real estate. A [report](#) has also revealed how the national and state CRZAs are dominated by officials from government institutions and have no or insufficient representation of the frontline communities.

A host of projects and programmes have also been launched to financially pump up the blue economy in India over the last decade. In 2014, the Prime Minister of India unveiled the [Blue Revolution](#) scheme aimed at the growth of the fisheries sector. Among other [initiatives](#), separate ministries were established for fisheries, animal husbandry and dairy; and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) and the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) were instituted to develop fisheries infrastructure. Between Financial Year 2020-2025, for example, an investment of INR 20,050 has been envisaged in the fisheries sector. The World Bank has expressed interest in investing in the PMMSY under its Program-for-Results (PforR) Financing for India's Blue Revolution Program. In 2022, the World Bank has [approved](#) USD 400 million to another blue economy project of India, viz. Enhancing Coastal and Ocean Resource Efficiency (ENCORE) Phase I (also see [here](#)). During Phase 1, ENCORE will encompass eight coastal states (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal) and three coastal Union Territories (Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry). A third project, namely, the [SAGAR](#) (Security and Growth for All in the Region) pertaining to maritime security and trade in the Indian Ocean region was launched in 2015. In December 2018, the Information Fusion Centre–Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) was started at the Information Management Centre (IMAC) with the aim of fostering deep engagement with other nations and international agencies in terms of maritime relations and information sharing.

Finally, the signature programme of the Government of India under the blue economy is the [Sagarmala](#), an initiative to build and connect ports and maritime-coastal infrastructure. Launched in 2015, the project objectives are: (a) Port Modernization & New Port Development, (b) Port Connectivity Enhancement, (c) Port-linked Industrialization, (d) Coastal Community Development, and (e) Coastal Shipping & Inland Waterways Transport. As part of this programme, a [National Perspective Plan](#) (NPP) was prepared in 2016 for the development of India's entire coastline, navigable waterways and maritime infrastructure. More than 574 projects have been [identified](#) under this programme for implementation between 2015-2035. As of 2021, a total of 802 projects worth INR 5.53 lakh crore are part of Sagarmala Programme (see [here](#)). Among them, 172 projects worth INR 88,235 crore have been completed and 235 projects worth INR 2.17 lakh crore are under implementation. The NPP identified Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ) and industrial clusters are developed around port facilities. For instance, the Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) launched the Gujarat Maritime Cluster in 2021. These maritime clusters aim to connect industries, investors, operators, chambers of commerce, scientists and experts to strengthen the port-led development model. The Gujarat Maritime University, for example, runs in collaboration with the Gujarat Maritime Cluster. The Sagarmala programme has attracted investments from the multilateral development banks (MDBs) such as the ADB and Japan International Cooperation

Agency (JICA). For example, ADB has [approved](#) USD 631 million to develop the 800 kilometers industrial corridor between the port cities of Visakhapatnam and Chennai.

The next exploitation frontier: Implications of the blue economy projects

The Sagarmala programme, as activists and researchers have noted, is likely to have devastating consequences for the coastal environment, maritime ecology and the frontline communities who have been traditionally dependent on the coasts and the seas. Researcher and financial analyst Himanshu Damle has [noted](#) that the Sagarmala programme is a classic example of “ocean grabbing” by big capital through regulation of the coasts, identification of CEZs, making industrial corridors for port-led industrialisation and raw material landing, infrastructure development, development of tourism, and similar activities that deprive the traditional coastal communities (such as small-scale fishers) of their rights to access the commons. Moreover, grassroots organizations such as the National Fishworkers’ Forum (NFF) and National Alliance of People’s Movements (NAPM) have [argued](#) that the ports and coastal development projects under the Sagarmala programme have the following consequences for the coastal communities: (a) environmental (for example, coastal erosion and coastal accretion due to activities like dredging and construction or the negative effects on the sea bed); (b) socio-economic (for example, access to the seas and fishing due to construction of breakwaters and consequent disturbance in the ocean currents or due to industrial fishing), (c) political (for example, their declining rights to access the commons because of exploitation of coastal and marine resources). Moreover, the privatization of the port infrastructure (for example, Adani Group’s investments in several projects) and the ocean economy has been questioned by critics (see [here](#)). In addition to the financial support from governments, MDBs and the private sector, the infrastructure projects under this programme are also getting [funded](#) by public sector banks, insurance and pension funds which put people’s savings at risk. In other words, the blue economy model, if one looks at it from a peoples’ perspective, is the new exploitation frontier.

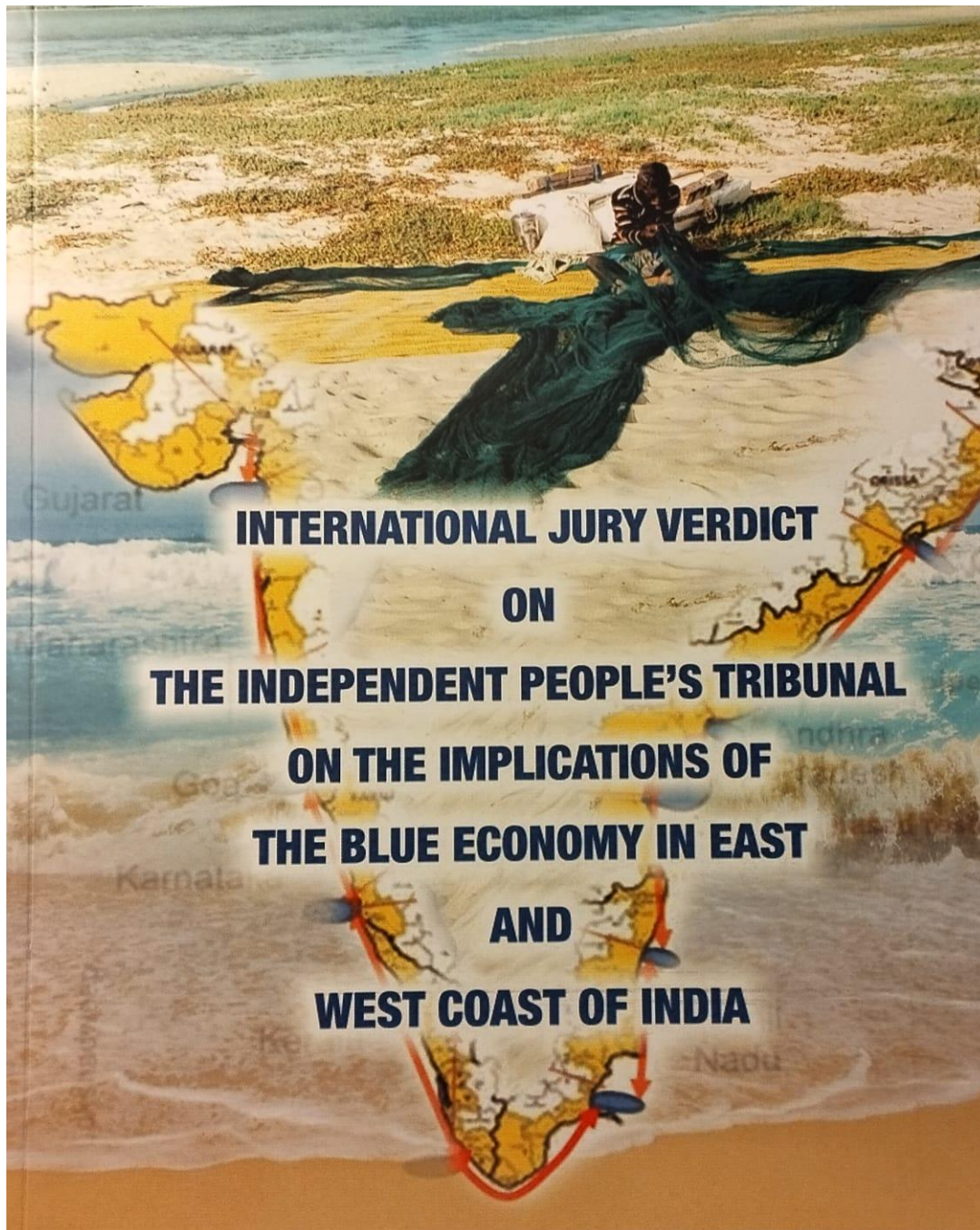
Here follows a few examples of how fishing and coastal communities have been impacted by the blue economy projects in India. In [Tamil Nadu](#), the construction of two new ports in Enayam and Sirkazhi and commercial activities around them have alarmed the traditional fishing communities who reside in CRZ area (i.e. 500 metres from the sea). In [Visakhapatnam](#), regulations have put a curb on coastal fishing thereby impacting the livelihoods of the fisherpeople. The development of the Mundra port (Adani Group) in [Gujarat](#), experts noted, have devastated the coastal ecosystems and dispossessed people of their habitat and livelihoods. The expansion of Adani Group’s [Kattupalli port](#) in Tamil Nadu has also been resisted by the local communities who feared that the project would affect the livelihood of around 50,000 villagers and cause widespread environmental degradation. Local residents of Ennore, Tamil Nadu, also [protested](#) against the Tamil Nadu Electricity Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO) in 2021 for encroachment of water bodies and violation of environmental laws in the Ennore creek. Violation of environmental rules was also noticed in Adani Group’s [Vizhijam](#) port where

the length of the breakwater exceeded by 1.8 kilometers, thus impacting the marine ecology and movement of fishes. The research team of an independent tribunal on blue economy in the east and west coasts of India has documented the negative impacts of the port-led development in multiple other coastal cities such as Karwar (Karnataka), Mormugao (Goa), Vadhavan (Maharashtra), among others (see [here](#)).

Conclusion

A recent [report](#) published by the UNCTAD revealed that the blue economy has contributed 6 percent of the global trade. India, it also mentioned, is the second largest exporter of ocean-based goods and services among the developing countries after China. However, as the multiple instances of ocean grabbing through commercial activities in and around the oceans and efforts to financialize nature show, the picture is not so rosy. Laws have been diluted, the voices of the fisher and coastal communities remain unheard due to lack of representation in decision-making bodies, ports and the coasts are increasingly privatized and the aggressive loot of big capital with a singular agenda of economic growth is devastating the ocean environment. Scholars have pointed out the limits to blue growth ([here](#) and [here](#)). It is important to put people over profits to save the oceanscape. Blue justice is the demand of the time.

Annexure I: Images



Cover image of the report of the International Jury Verdict on implications of blue economy programme in India, 2020-21.

National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers resolves to –

- ★ **Demand that the governments of the world including the government of India immediately restrict or stop all processes and activities that aggravate the adverse impacts of the Climate Crisis on fisheries;**
- ★ **Build pressure internationally including on the government of India to prepare and implement schemes for enhancing Climate Adaptation capacities of affected communities including that of the small scale fishing communities;**
- ★ **Move the governments of the world including the government of India to take effective measures in drastically reducing carbon emissions with a clear timeline;**
- ★ **Demand that the governments of the world including the government of India provide the fishing communities with the right scope and proper mechanism to participate in determining and implementing policies and schemes aimed at reducing impacts of the Climate Crisis on fisheries – in both inland and marine waters.**
- ★ **Demand that the governments of the world including the government of India commission forthwith independent scientific studies to determine the state of the inland and marine waters in their countries and the ways and means for restoring them to their natural health with special reference to climate change and fisheries.**

STOP

**Corporate-Cosumerist Destruction of our Climate and
Plunder of our Natural Resources**

We Need Our Climate Back

SAVE CLIMATE, SAVE WATER, SAVE FISH, SAVE FISHER PEOPLE

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**NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR SMALL SCALE FISH WORKERS
(NPSSFW)**

Back cover of a publication by a grassroots organization of fisher communities in India. The image shows the resolution undertaken after an organizational meeting. The clear demand is to “stop the corporate-consumerist destruction of the planet and plunder of natural resources.”

**What
We
Stand
and
Advocate
for**

Mission Statement

We stand and advocate for a fisheries policy that protects the fish resources and the small and marginalised fishing communities' right to use the fish resources in harmony with nature.

We dedicate ourselves to establish an alternative paradigm for sustainable development with peoples' power and involve ourselves in transformative politics to bring in the same.



**National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers
(NPSSF)**

A call for an alternative model of sustainable development by an Indian fisher communities organization.

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