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Personalities
who influenced Africa's
Blue Economy
2025

**T
O
P** **5** **Blue
Economy
initiatives**
- Africa 2025



Media



Strategy



Influence



Training



**MARITIM
AFRICA**

WEEK

3rd edition



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Foreword

From February last year, we have moved to April this year. At this pace, our list next year might be released in June... laughs.

More seriously, this exercise proved particularly demanding this year. The growing dynamism of the blue economy in Africa, marked by a multiplication of stakeholders, initiatives, and structuring projects, has considerably broadened the field of possibilities — but also that of choices.

The selection of personalities was, unsurprisingly, the most delicate step. Between proposals from team members, field feedback, and our own research, identifying those whose impact is real, measurable, and sustainable in their respective countries proved to be a genuine challenge. At times, it felt almost as complex as navigating the Strait of Hormuz in the current context... laughs.

Thanks to the commitment of our team and the strength of our professional network across the continent, we were able to develop a list that we hope is both representative and inspiring. It reflects the diversity of contributions — institutional, entrepreneurial, and associative — that are shaping Africa's blue economy today.

This year, our list is enriched with initiatives that caught our attention, standing out for their tangible impact on territories and communities, and illustrating the sector's transformative potential.

Maritimafrica Top 5 Blue Economy Initiatives – Africa 2025

Beyond strategic discourse and major infrastructure projects, certain concrete initiatives, driven by institutions, ports, centers of excellence, and field actors, reflect the real transformation of the maritime sector on

the continent.

Through the **Top 5 Blue Economy Initiatives – Africa 2025**, Maritimafrica highlights five actions that illustrate a new dynamic: **better governance, enhanced security, improved communication**, and **greater inclusion** in the development of Africa's blue economy.

This ranking is not solely intended to showcase projects. Its ambition is to **highlight inspiring, replicable, and high-impact models** capable of informing the thinking of public decision-makers, ports, technical and financial partners, as well as the entire African maritime ecosystem.

Objective: to identify, promote, and amplify initiatives that are concretely transforming Africa's blue economy.

We wish you an excellent discovery of this 2025 edition of the Maritimafrica List.

Stay connected on maritimafrica.com: 2026 is already shaping up to be rich in new dynamics and emerging talents to watch in the blue economy across the continent.



Carlos Kpodiefin
Editorial Director



Maritimafrica List 2025

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**T
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Entry into Force of the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter



adopted in 2010, aimed at structuring, harmonizing, and modernizing African maritime governance.

This milestone was achieved following the deposit of the fifteenth instrument of ratification by Uganda, reaching the required threshold after fifteen years of political and institutional mobilization.

The Charter:

- Harmonizes national and regional maritime policies;
- Strengthens cooperation among maritime administrations, ports, shippers' councils, and states;

- Establishes a common framework for:
 - Maritime safety and security,
 - Port efficiency,
 - Marine environmental protection,
 - Development of multimodal corridors linking coastal and landlocked states;
- Lays the foundation for:
 - Investment in ports and shipbuilding,
 - Skills development and maritime employment,
 - Inclusion of women and youth in the maritime sector.

Initiative Profile

Initiative Name: Revised African Maritime Transport Charter (2010) – Entry into Force

Geographic Scope: African continent

Key Date: August 14, 2025

Lead Institution: African Union – African Union Commission (AUC)

States Parties (15): Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Kenya, Mozambique, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Togo, Uganda

Blue Economy Sector:

- Continental maritime governance
- Maritime transport, ports, and shipping
- Regional integration and trade (AfCFTA)
- Sustainable blue economy development

Overview of the Initiative

The entry into force of the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter marks the official activation of a major continental legal instrument,

Why Our Team Selected This Initiative ?

Africa's blue economy has historically been hindered by fragmented legal and institutional frameworks, limiting market integration, port competitiveness, and the development of African shipping.

In this context, the entry into force of the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter represents a strategic turning point, moving beyond declarations of intent to establish a binding legal framework driven by African states themselves.

This initiative was selected because:

- It represents one of the most structuring maritime governance acts ever adopted at the continental level;
- It aligns African maritime transport with the ambitions of Agenda 2063 and the AfCFTA;
- It marks a shift from a sectoral vision to an integrated blue economy approach based on sovereignty, cooperation, and sustainability.

Differentiating Features of the Initiative

- A binding continental legal instrument, not just a policy framework;
- A cross-cutting scope covering

ring ports, shipping, security, environment, and trade;

- An inclusive approach integrating landlocked states, women, and youth;
- Strong alignment with African priorities and ownership by member states.

Key Results – 2025

- Official entry into force of the Charter (August 14, 2025)
- 15 African states ratified, reaching the required threshold
- 15 years after its initial adoption (2010–2025)
- Upcoming activation of:
 - The Continental Unit,
 - The Committee of States Parties

Key Challenge Addressed

Providing Africa with a coherent and modern legal framework to govern its maritime space, enhance the competitiveness of its ports and shipping, and support intra-African trade under the AfCFTA.

Observed and Expected Impacts

- Institutional and Governance Impacts
 - Strengthening of continental maritime governance;
 - Improved harmonization of national and regional maritime policies;
 - Increased coordination among ports, administra-

tions, and states.

- Economic and Operational Impacts
 - Expected improvement in port and logistics performance;
 - Facilitation of intra-African maritime trade;
 - Increased investment in ports, shipping, and shipbuilding.
- Blue Economy and Human Capital Impacts
 - Development of maritime jobs and skills;
 - Promotion of inclusion of women and youth;
 - Strengthening of marine environmental protection.

Continental Strategic Significance

The entry into force of the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter marks the beginning of a new era for African maritime transport, ports, and shipping. It reflects the collective commitment of African states to transform their maritime space into a strategic driver of integration, job creation, and sustainable prosperity.

This initiative stands out as one of the major milestones of Africa's blue economy in 2025, both for its institutional impact and its long-term transformative potential.

PAC Média Connect



Initiative Profile

Initiative Name: PAC Média Connect – 1st Edition

Country / Port: Benin – Port of Cotonou (Port Autonome de Cotonou)

Period: October 1–2, 2025

Lead Organization: Port Autonome de Cotonou (PAC)

What the Initiative Is About ?

The first edition of PAC Média

Connect was designed as a structured platform for dialogue and immersion between the Port Autonome de Cotonou and media professionals, with the aim of fostering mutual understanding and building sustainable partnerships.

Activities Implemented:

- Institutional presentation sessions followed by discussions and Q&A on:
 - port modernization projects;
 - the digitalization of port

- operations;
 - environmental and sustainability initiatives.
- Active participation of key members of the Port’s management team;
- Guided tour of the port platform, enabling journalists to directly observe operations, infrastructure, and cargo flows;
- Direct exchange session with the Director General of the Port Autonome de Cotonou;
- Establishment of a long-term partnership approach, going beyond a one-off communication event.

Why Our Team Selected the PAC Média Connect Initiative ?

In a context of rapid transformation of African ports, competitiveness strategies are primarily focused on infrastructure, digitalization of operations, and ecological transition. While these drivers are essential, they remain insufficient without a redefined strategic communication approach capable of making these transformations clear, understandable, and credible to the public.

Across the continent, the relationship between ports and the media often remains limited or weak, resulting in:

- partial understanding of port missions, projects, and challenges among journalists and the general public;
- a persistent structural gap between port institutions and media professionals;
- media coverage often limited to short-term events, without deeper analysis of long-term transformations related to modernization, digitalization, and sustainability.

In response, PAC Média Connect stands out through a fundamentally different approach. The initiative does not aim to generate short-term communication impact or simple “media buzz,” but rather to equip journalists with a better understanding of the strategic and operational challenges of the Port Autonome de Cotonou.

Through structured exchanges and

on-site immersion, PAC Média Connect has helped establish a genuine institutional connection with the media. Without aiming to train specialized journalists, the initiative sustainably strengthens their understanding of how a modern port operates and its role in the national and regional economy.

Key Differentiating Elements

- A still-rare initiative in West Africa, positioning the media as true strategic partners in port development;
- A pedagogical and immersive approach, going beyond traditional institutional communication formats;
- Direct contribution to sound port governance, a core pillar of the blue economy.

Key Results – 1st Edition (2025)

- 22 media outlets invited
- 21 media outlets attended
- 2 days of exchanges and port immersion
- 1 full tour of the port platform

Key Objective of the Initiative

To sustainably improve the quality, reliability, and depth of port-related information shared with the public, thereby enhancing the visibility of the transformations undertaken by the Port Autonome de Cotonou.

Observed and Expected Impacts

- Institutional and Governance

Impacts

- Strengthening of PAC’s institutional transparency;
- Establishment of a port-media relationship based on mutual understanding rather than top-down communication.

- Operational Impacts

- Improved media understanding of the port’s technical and strategic challenges;
- Enhanced visibility of digitalization and ecological transition projects among the public.

- Impacts on the Information Ecosystem

- Emergence of more structured, contextualized, and fact-based reporting on port activities;
- Contribution to greater social acceptance of port development projects.

Scope of the Initiative

PAC Média Connect stands out as a high-impact institutional initiative, fully aligned with the modernization dynamics of Africa’s blue economy. It highlights the strategic role of communication and media engagement as key levers for performance, governance, and credibility in African ports.

PANEL CYBERMAR 2025 – SAFE SEAS FOR AFRICA



Initiative Overview

Name of the initiative: PANEL CYBERMAR 2025

Country / Location: Côte d'Ivoire – Abidjan (ISMI–ARSTM, Yopougon)

Dates: May 14–16, 2025

Strategic framework: SAFE SEAS FOR AFRICA Project (funded by the European Union)

Organizer: Institut de Sécurité Maritime Interrégionale (ISMI) – ARSTM

Key partners: UNITAR, EU–Africa Chamber of Commerce, EU, SEP-

CIM-AEM, Maritimafrica

Blue economy sectors:

- Maritime safety and security
- Maritime and port cybersecurity
- Regional governance (Yaoundé Architecture)
- Capacity building & innovation

Description of the Initiative

PANEL CYBERMAR 2025 is a high-level event designed as a regional platform for dialogue, training, and networking between maritime stakeholders and cybersecurity professionals.

Program highlights:

- Structured panels (7 sessions) covering:
 - cybersecurity challenges in the Gulf of Guinea;
 - development of cyber policies and strategies;
 - management of digital risks and threats;
 - practical applications in the maritime and port sectors;
 - interactive workshops (risk assessment, incident management);
 - cybersecurity financing;
 - future challenges and directions.
- Exhibition of cyber solutions and services, promoting:

- business networking;
 - funding opportunities;
 - access to innovative solutions.
- Strong institutional dimension, including:
- official launch of the SAFE SEAS FOR AFRICA project;
 - inauguration of the new ISMI building.

Why Our Team Selected PANEL CYBERMAR 2025 ?

In a context of accelerated digitalization of maritime trade, cyber risks now pose a direct threat to port operations continuity, supply chain security, and the economic sovereignty of African coastal states. However, cybersecurity remains insufficiently integrated into regional maritime strategies.

PANEL CYBERMAR 2025 addresses this gap by positioning cybersecurity not as an isolated technical constraint, but as a strategic pillar of the blue economy—on par with maritime safety, port performance, and regional governance.

The initiative stands out for:

- its regional anchoring (West and Central Africa), directly linked to the Yaoundé Architecture;
- its ability to connect public decision-makers, ports, shipping companies, and cyber firms;
- its practical, solution-oriented

approach focused on skills and financing.

Key Results and Participation (2025 Edition)

- 3 days of panels and exhibitions
- Over 1,000 participants
- Participation of top managers from:
 - operational security centers,
 - public administrations,
 - ports and shipping companies,
 - international stakeholders and cyber experts
- Regional coverage: West and Central Africa
- Mobilization of international and national experts

Key Challenge Addressed

Strengthening sustainable maritime cybersecurity governance in Africa to secure port infrastructure, trade flows, and critical information systems in the maritime sector.

Observed and Expected Impacts

- Institutional and governance impacts
 - Increased awareness of cyber risks within maritime organizations;
 - Support for the development of cybersecurity policies and strategies adapted

to the regional context;

- Strengthening ISMI's role as a regional center of excellence.

- Operational impacts
 - Improved capacity of ports and administrations to anticipate, detect, and manage cyber incidents;
 - Better integration of cybersecurity into maritime and port operations.
- Economic ecosystem impacts
 - Emergence of a maritime cybersecurity market in Africa;
 - Funding and partnership opportunities for cyber sector companies;
 - Contribution to the resilience and competitiveness of the regional blue economy.

Why PANEL CYBERMAR 2025 Matters for Africa's Blue Economy ?

PANEL CYBERMAR 2025 stands out as a structuring initiative at the intersection of security, innovation, and economic development. By placing cybersecurity at the heart of maritime challenges, it directly contributes to protecting strategic assets, ensuring continuity of maritime trade, and supporting the sustainable modernization of Africa's blue economy.

Blue Economy Livelihoods & Skills Development / Blue Economy Entrepreneurship & Leadership



Initiative Overview

Initiative Name: Blue Economy Livelihoods & Skills Development & Blue Economy Entrepreneurship & Leadership

Country / Target Area: Somalia (East Africa)

Period: September – December 2025

Lead Organization: Institute for Blue Economy and Innovation (IBEI)

What the Initiative Is About ?

This initiative aims to empower women and girls by actively integrating them into the blue economy through the development of practical, entrepreneurial, and leadership skills.

It is based on a dual approach:

- Strengthening livelihoods (technical skills)
- Promoting entrepreneurship and women’s leadership

Key Activities Implemented:

- Practical training in:
 - sustainable fisheries;

- aquaculture;
- marine value chains;
- Entrepreneurship development workshops:
 - business creation and management;
 - innovation in the blue economy;
 - access to maritime economic opportunities;
- Leadership programs for women and girls;
- Mentorship and coaching sessions;
- Awareness-raising on ocean sustainability and economic resilience.

Why the Initiative Was Launched ?

In many African coastal countries, particularly Somalia:

- women remain underrepresented in maritime professions;
- access to technical skills and financing is limited;
- fisheries value chains still hold largely untapped potential.

In response to these challenges, the initiative addresses a dual objective:

- economic inclusion of women;
- sustainable development of the blue economy.

It positions women not as passive beneficiaries, but as economic actors and leaders in the maritime sector.

Key Differentiating Factors

- Integrated approach combining technical skills, entrepreneurship, and leadership;
- Specific focus on young girls, starting at school level;
- Direct integration into local value chains (fisheries, aquaculture, processing);
- Simultaneous social, economic, and environmental impact;

- Strong focus on sustainable empowerment rather than assistance.

Key Results – 2025 to Early 2026

- Over 200 young girls already trained and impacted in Somalia
- Programs deployed across several institutions (schools and universities)
- Intensive training and mentorship sessions over several months
- Concrete integration into blue economy activities

Core Challenge Addressed

Turning women and girls into pillars of inclusive growth in the blue economy by transforming access to skills into real economic opportunities.

Observed and Expected Impacts

- Socio-Economic Impacts
 - Improved incomes for beneficiaries;
 - Creation of income-generating activities;
 - Reduction of gender inequalities in maritime sectors.

- Impacts on the Blue Economy Ecosystem
 - Strengthening of local value chains;
 - Promotion of sustainable practices in fisheries and aquaculture;
 - Contribution to the resilience of coastal communities.
- Impacts on Women’s Leadership
 - Emergence of a new generation of women leaders;
 - Increased participation of women in decision-making;
 - Transformation of social perceptions regarding women’s roles in the maritime sector.

Scope of the Initiative

This initiative stands out as a replicable model in Africa, demonstrating how the blue economy can become a powerful driver of inclusion, innovation, and social transformation.

It fully embodies the vision: “**Empowering Women, Sustaining Our Oceans**”.

Training of Journalists and Media Professionals on Maritime Security, Safety, and the Blue Economy in the Gulf of Guinea



Initiative Overview

Name of the initiative: Journalists Training Course – Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea

Country / Port concerned: Ghana – Tema (with at-sea activities)

Period: October 7–9, 2025

Organizers: Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute (GoGMI) & EnMAR Project

Description of the Initiative

This initiative is an intensive training program designed for journalists, aimed at strengthening their understanding of maritime security issues in the Gulf of Guinea and improving the quality of media coverage on maritime topics.

It combines theoretical input, field immersion, and practical exercises, within a broader effort to professionalize maritime journalism.

Activities Implemented:

- Training sessions on:
 - Maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea

- Maritime governance challenges at national and regional levels
- International interventions in maritime security and safety
- Specialized modules:
 - Investigative journalism
 - Data journalism
 - Open-source intelligence (OSINT) techniques
- Presentations on:
 - The maritime legal framework
 - International and regional partnerships
 - Media–maritime sector

- relations
- Field immersion:
 - Industrial visit
 - At-sea experience with the Ghanaian Navy
- Practical workshops:
 - Case studies (maritime crises, IUU fishing)
 - Group exercises (tabletop exercises)
- Dialogue and feedback sessions with experts and institutions.

Rationale Behind the Initiative

In the Gulf of Guinea—a strategic region facing significant security challenges (piracy, illegal fishing, trafficking)—media coverage remains often:

- Fragmented
- Insufficiently specialized
- Limited in its understanding of technical and geopolitical issues

This initiative addresses a key need: To strengthen journalists’ capacity to produce more reliable, structured, and strategic maritime information

It also aims to bridge the gap between:

- Maritime security experts
- Institutions
- Media professionals

Key Differentiators of the Initiative

- Highly specialized training

- dedicated to maritime journalism
- Direct access to military, legal, and institutional experts
- Immersive approach including at-sea experience
- Integration of modern skills (data, OSINT, investigation)
- Real-life simulation through crisis exercises

Key Results – 2025

- 3 intensive days of training and immersion
- 30 people trained
- Participation of journalists from several countries in the region
- 1 at-sea experience with the Ghanaian Navy
- Case studies on maritime crises and illegal (IUU) fishing
- Direct interaction with regional and international institutions

Core Objective of the Initiative

To improve the quality of information on maritime security, thereby enhancing public understanding and supporting stability efforts in the Gulf of Guinea

Observed and Expected Impacts

- Media Impact
 - Enhanced skills of journalists on maritime issues
 - Production of more accurate, analytical, and contextualized content

- rate, analytical, and contextualized content
- Development of investigative maritime journalism
- Maritime Governance Impact
 - Greater visibility of security policies and actions
 - Strengthened institutional transparency
 - Contribution to improved accountability of stakeholders
- Regional Impact
 - Increased awareness of security issues in the Gulf of Guinea
 - Contribution to the fight against illegal fishing and illicit activities
 - Strengthened cooperation between media and institutions.

Scope of the Initiative

The Journalists Training Course stands out as a strategic initiative at the intersection of maritime security and information, demonstrating that the media are key actors in maritime governance.

It highlights the central role of journalism in:

- Understanding maritime issues
- Raising public awareness
- Strengthening regional security.

• Our Media Brands



• Media partners



Our Mission : To inform, showcase, and structure the ecosystem of the blue economy, as well as the maritime, logistics, and transport industries in Africa.



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Personalities
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Dr. Paul ADALIKWU

Secretary General of Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) Nigeria

Dr. Paul ADALIKWU, a Nigerian national, was elected the 6th Secretary General of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) in November 2021.

He brings over 30 years of distinguished experience spanning corporate governance, maritime administration, strategic policy development, and international development cooperation.

His expertise includes resource mobilization, strategic partnerships, organization of high-level international events, project management, and coordination of multi-country initiatives, particularly in the areas of maritime safety and security.

Dr. Adalikwu has worked extensively across academia and the public sector in several countries, including the United States, Nigeria, Taiwan, and Côte d'Ivoire, among others.

Since assuming office as Secretary General, Dr. Paul

ADALIKWU has provided transformative leadership to MOWCA for over four years, steering the Organization through a period of institutional renewal and enhanced regional relevance.

Under his tenure, MOWCA has recorded notable milestones, including strengthened governance and administrative reforms, improved financial discipline, and increased visibility and credibility among Member States and international partners.

He has advanced regional cooperation on maritime safety and security, port and shipping development, and capacity building, while revitalizing engagement with strategic partners and donor institutions.

His leadership has also prioritized the alignment of MOWCA's programmes with global maritime instruments and continental development frameworks, thereby reinforcing the Organization's role as a key platform for maritime collaboration in West and Central Africa.



Abdallah SERIAI

*CEO of Marmedsa Bemarine,
Founding member of the Association
of Maritime Agents (APAMA) **Algeria***

Abdallah SERIAI has more than 47 years of experience in the maritime sector, having begun his career in 1976 within the port authority. He later rose to the position of Central Director of Algerian Ports at the Ministry of Transport.

Trained as an economist, he played a pivotal role in negotiations with the World Bank to secure financing for major port infrastructure projects in Annaba, Algiers, Béjaïa, Oran and Djendjen.

His expertise was further strengthened through missions with UNCTAD and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), before concluding his public-sector career within the central administration.

For nearly two decades, Mr. SERIAI has focused on establishing and developing private companies operating in maritime-related services, including ship agency,

freight forwarding and international logistics.

He is currently Chief Executive Officer of Marmedsa Bemarine, a national leader in logistics in Algeria.

Widely recognized as a pioneer of Algeria's maritime sector, he is a founding member of the Association of Maritime Agents (APAMA).

He also holds prominent leadership roles within the national and international business community, serving as President of the Algerian–Spanish Business Council and, notably, President of the National Union of Transport and Logistics Employers (Translog).

Mr. SERIAI remains an influential and committed figure in the development of Algeria's maritime and logistics sectors.



Princess DUGBA

Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources **Sierra Leone**

Princess DUGBA is one of the leading figures in West Africa's maritime transformation. Appointed in July 2023, she has committed herself to the sustainable overhaul of the fisheries sector and the advancement of the blue economy as a lever for national development.

The year 2025 marks a turning point under her leadership with the realization of major structural projects. Notably, she has spearheaded the implementation of the Black Johnson Fishing Port, a strategic \$55 million investment. Integrating cold storage infrastructure and ship maintenance facilities, this project is designed to capture the added value of fishery products locally.

Driven by a market expansion strategy, she launched the Export Certification Portal in July 2025. This initiative facilitates access for Sierra Leonean seafood to the Chinese market under preferential tariff conditions, thereby strengthening economic opportunities for local stakeholders.

In parallel, she has distinguished herself through her

firm stance against Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, while establishing closed fishing seasons (biological rest periods) to preserve marine resources. Her approach balances sustainability with inclusion, providing support mechanisms for artisanal fishing communities.

A staunch advocate for women's empowerment, she promotes their role throughout the fisheries value chain and supports the implementation of Sierra Leone's Blue Economy Strategic Framework, which aims to generate sustainable revenue from marine resources.

On the international stage, her participation in the 2025 Our Ocean Conference in Seoul reinforced Sierra Leone's position in global discussions regarding ocean protection and the fight against marine pollution.

Through her pragmatism and determination, Princess DUGBA embodies a new generation of African leaders translating the potential of the blue economy into concrete results for growth, resilience, and coastal communities.



Tsimanaoraty Paubert MAHATANTE

*International Expert Consultant,
Former Minister of Fisheries and
Blue Economy Madagascar*

A Senior Lecturer at the University of Toliara, MAHATANTE Tsimanaoraty Paubert has been a Lecturer-Researcher since 2017 and an International Expert Consultant for over 18 years in the fields of fisheries and aquaculture management, marine and coastal ecosystems, blue economy, ocean accounting, ocean governance, climate change, and renewable energy.

He holds a PhD in Marine and Fisheries Sciences, a Doctorate Honoris Causa from River University, Tampa, Florida (USA), and is an alumnus of the University of California, Davis (USA).

Paubert MAHATANTE served five terms as Minister of Fisheries and Blue Economy of Madagascar, a position

he held for a cumulative period of four years and two months (August 2021 – September 2025). In recognition of his leadership, he was awarded the African Blue Economy Leadership Award in 2024.

A widely respected thought leader, Paubert is recognized as one of the leading global figures in the blue economy. He currently conducts independent blue diplomacy missions worldwide—particularly in Africa—aimed at fostering collective intelligence to advance a truly sustainable, fair, equitable, and responsible blue economy while preserving marine ecosystems for the benefit of coastal communities.



Harry BARNES-DABBAN

*Founder and Executive Coordinator
of Ports Environmental Network–Africa
(PENAf) Ghana*

Harry BARNES-DABBAN is the Founder and Executive Coordinator of Ports Environmental Network–Africa (PENAf), a pan-African organisation promoting voluntary and cooperative approaches to environmental and social sustainability governance in ports.

Through PENAf, he advances environmental leadership and sustainable port operations in Africa via capacity building, applied research, and international study visits that enable knowledge sharing and best practice exchange.

His work addresses key issues including port sustainability, climate resilience, blue economy development, decarbonisation, energy efficiency, and the prevention of illegal transboundary movement of hazardous waste.

He is the initiator of the African Ports Environment Sustainability Conference, now in its third edition, and the originator of the Blue-24 Governance (B-24G) framework, which integrates Blue Economy principles with 24-Hour Economy strategies to support continuous and sustainable port-led development.

Harry previously served as Corporate Environment Manager at the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority and has consulted for organisations such as UNEP, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank.

He holds a PhD in Environmental Policy and Governance from Wageningen University & Research (Netherlands).



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Cyrille Serge ATONFACK GUEMO

*Technical Adviser to the Minister of Defense, Navy Captain, Ministry of Defense / National Navy **Cameroon***

Cyrille Serge ATONFACK GUEMO is a senior officer in the Cameroonian Navy, a legal expert specialized in maritime law, and a recognized authority in maritime governance, maritime security, and the blue economy in Africa.

A Captain since 2021, he serves as Technical Advisor to the Minister of Defense, while also holding the positions of Head of the Communication Division of the Ministry of Defense and Spokesperson for the Armed Forces.

He plays a central role in the design and implementation of Cameroon's National Maritime Strategy, the oversight of State Action at Sea, and the strengthening of interministerial and interagency cooperation.

At the regional level, he is a key actor in the Yaoundé

Architecture for Maritime Security and Safety in the Gulf of Guinea, where he has managed operational follow-up.

As the national focal point for the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) and a member of the African Union Task Force overseeing its implementation, he is also deeply engaged in international cooperation (EU, G7++ FoGG, United States, China, Brazil, Spain).

An expert and speaker for leading institutions, his work in advancing African maritime governance has been recognized with numerous national and international honors, including being named a KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF MARITIME MERIT of the French Republic.



Col. Aké Lazare ABE

Senior Administrator of Maritime and Port Affairs, Director of the Institut de Sécurité Maritime Interrégional (ISMI) Côte d'Ivoire

With 23 years of experience in the maritime sector, Col. ABE Aké Lazare has been leading the Institut de Sécurité Maritime Interrégional (ISMI) in Abidjan since 2018, an institute he helped establish.

He has developed and overseen training and capacity-building programs in maritime security and safety for the States of the Gulf of Guinea, including the Master's in Law and Security of Maritime and Oceanic Activities (University of Nantes) and several international projects funded by the EU, France, and Germany (SWAIMS, WeCAPS, SAFE SEAS for Africa, SAFE PORT).

These initiatives have trained and strengthened the skills of over 3,000 professionals from maritime administrations, naval forces, customs, maritime prefectures, and private companies, enhancing regional maritime governance and marine environmental protection.

He was awarded Knight of the Ivorian Maritime Merit Order (December 22, 2021) and Knight of the French Maritime Merit Order (May 8, 2025) in recognition of his contributions to maritime security.

He is also a regular panelist at international conferences on maritime security, innovation, and surveillance technology.

In May 2025, he chaired the High-Level Panel on Cybersecurity Governance for maritime and port organizations in the Gulf of Guinea.

A graduate of the École Nationale d'Administration (ENA) of Abidjan (specializing in Maritime and Port Affairs) and the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden (specializing in Maritime Law and Policy), he combines technical expertise with strategic vision.



Abdelkrim REZAL

*Adviser at the Ministry
of Transport, Former CEO of
the SERPORT Group **Algeria***

Abdelkrim REZAL has more than 40 years of experience in the maritime sector.

He holds a First-Class Marine Engineer Officer diploma (Higher Maritime Institute of Bou Ismaïl, 1983) and a Magister degree in Maritime Engineering from the World Maritime University (Malmö, Sweden, 1985). Throughout his career, he has held numerous key positions within Algeria's maritime and port system.

He began his professional career as a Marine Engineer Officer at CNAN, before becoming a Lecturer and later Deputy Academic Director at the Higher Maritime Institute of Bou Ismaïl.

He subsequently served as Director of Merchant Ship-

ping and Ports, as well as Adviser at the Ministry of Transport.

More recently, he was Chief Executive Officer of the SERPORT Group, responsible for the management of all Algerian ports, and also served as Adviser within the LOGITRANS Group.

He currently serves as Adviser at the Ministry of Transport.

Drawing on this extensive and diversified career, Mr. REZAL brings valuable expertise in maritime education and training, port governance, maritime transport and logistics.



Odilon Ghislain ANATO

*International Expert in Critical Infrastructure Security and High-Risk Environments **Benin***

Odilon Ghislain ANATO is a leading international expert in the security of critical infrastructure and high-risk environments in West Africa, with over fifteen years of experience across the port, offshore, industrial and mining sectors.

His career combines strong field-based operational expertise, in-depth knowledge of international standards, and a results-oriented strategic vision.

Certified ASIP, QHSE, ISO 28000 (Supply Chain Security) and BOSIET, he operates across the full security value chain, including threat analysis, risk assessment, design and deployment of protection systems, compliance auditing and capacity building.

His approach rigorously aligns international standards with African operational realities.

He has led major security missions at strategic sites such as the Port of Cotonou (Benin), the Port of Dakar (Senegal), the Léopold Sédar Senghor FPSO — a key asset in Senegal's oil production, as well as the IAMGOLD mining facility in Burkina Faso.

In 2025, he served as Chief of Mission for the security risk assessment and the development of security plans for the Port of Cotonou and its facilities.

Between 2024 and 2025, he trained more than 500 professionals on the ISPS Code, including facility security officers, port security guards, and a wide range of port stakeholders.

His training programs are recognized for their strong operational impact, decision-making focus and lasting performance improvements.



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Séraphin BHALAT

Director General of the Port Autonome de Pointe-Noire (PAPN) Congo

At the helm of the Port Autonome de Pointe-Noire (PAPN) since 2015, Séraphin BHALAT has led a major transformation of this strategic infrastructure, strengthening its position as a leading port hub in Central Africa.

Under his leadership, PAPN has implemented an extensive program of infrastructure modernization and operational performance optimization, significantly enhancing the port's competitiveness.

This momentum has resulted in notable achievements, particularly in 2024 with the reception of 14,000 TEU container vessels, marking a shift in category and demonstrating the port's alignment with international standards.

The specialization of berths and improved operational efficiency have helped reduce vessel turnaround times

and costs for shipping lines, further boosting PAPN's attractiveness.

In 2025, the port further consolidates its strategic role by hosting the 45th Annual Council of the AGPAOC, focused on sustainability. It also stands out by receiving awards, notably for best transit traffic, confirming its position as a major regional hub.

In this continuity, Séraphin BHALAT has consistently contributed to maintaining and elevating the port's level of performance, impact, and international relevance.

A Grand Officer of the Order of Congolese Merit, he is recognized as a key figure in port development and institutional governance in Central Africa.



Hien Yacouba SIE

Minister of Infrastructure and Road Maintenance, Former Director General of Port Autonome d'Abidjan (PAA) Côte d'Ivoire

Hien Yacouba SIE is one of the leading architects of port transformation in West Africa. A civil engineer and graduate of the ENSTP of Yamoussoukro (now INPHB), he joined the Port Autonome d'Abidjan (PAA) in 1994, where he rose through all technical and strategic levels before being appointed Director General in December 2010, officially assuming office in April 2011.

Upon his appointment, the Port of Abidjan was facing a critical phase marked by declining traffic, aging infrastructure, and a loss of confidence among partners.

Under his leadership, a far-reaching transformation was launched, structured around four strategic pillars: infrastructure modernization, operational performance improvement, quality enhancement, and compliance with safety and environmental standards.

This vision materialized through flagship projects such as the widening and deepening of the Vridi Canal, the construction of the second container terminal labeled

a “Green Terminal”, the commissioning of a modern Ro-Ro terminal, a grain terminal, and the expansion of the port estate through land reclamation. The results have been remarkable.

In 2024, total traffic reached 40.1 million tonnes, an increase of 15.6%, while container traffic exceeded 1.6 million TEUs, firmly positioning Abidjan as a leading logistics hub on Africa’s Atlantic seaboard.

Strengthened financial governance enabled the PAA to achieve a long-term AA rating from Bloomfield in 2025, granting access to international financial markets.

His leadership has been widely recognized through numerous national and continental distinctions, establishing the Port of Abidjan among Africa’s most high-performing port platforms.

Since 23 January 2026, he has been serving as Minister of Infrastructure and Road Maintenance.



Mercy MGHANGA

President of the Coastal Women in Fisheries Entrepreneurship Association in Kenya / Vice President of CAOPA Kenya

Mercy MGHANGA is a leading voice for small-scale fisheries and women's empowerment in Africa's blue economy. With over 20 years of experience as a dedicated fish trader and community leader in Kenya, she has consistently championed sustainable fisheries, marine biodiversity conservation, and inclusive coastal development.

She currently serves as Vice President of CAOPA (African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries), representing fisher folk across more than 30 African countries. In this role, she works to ensure that the voices of small-scale fishers are recognized within intergovernmental policy frameworks shaping Africa's sustainable development future.

Her advocacy focuses on ocean rights, climate resilience, and strengthening the participation of fishing communities in decision-making processes.

At the national level, she is President of the Women in Fisheries Entrepreneurship Association in Kenya, leading a powerful network of women fish traders along the coast.

Through collective purchasing, structured distribution, and reinvestment of profits, the organization supports capacity building in fish handling, business development, and sustainable fishing practices.

Previously, she served for a decade as Chairlady of a Beach Management Unit (BMU), where she promoted responsible fishing practices and advanced women's inclusion in fisheries governance.

Her leadership bridges grassroots action and continental policy influence, positioning her among Africa's most impactful champions of sustainable and inclusive blue growth.



TOGBUIGA ADELA AKLASSOU IV

Chief of the Canton of Bè / Honorary President of E.R.D.-Afrique (Environnement et Relève de Demain – Afrique) Togo

TOGBUIGA ADELA AKLASSOU IV has served as Chief of the Canton of Bè since 2012. A respected traditional leader and visionary, he embodies the balance between ancestral heritage and modern governance, promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

His commitment focuses on child protection, community cohesion, and environmental preservation, particularly along Togo's coastline.

Honorary President of E.R.D.-Afrique (Environnement et Relève de Demain – Afrique), established in 2015 in the Canton of Bè, he actively supports marine biodiversity conservation initiatives, especially the protection of sea turtles and their habitats.

Since its creation, the association has contributed to the release of 407 turtles, the hatching of 19,884 eggs, organized 649 night patrols to safeguard nesting females and their nests, and conducted more than 250 beach clean-up operations in Lomé, in collaboration with public authorities and institutional partners.

A former Project Officer at DCL Luxembourg, he serves on several national and international bodies, including the Global Fund, UNICEF, PLAN International, and the REDD+ Committee.

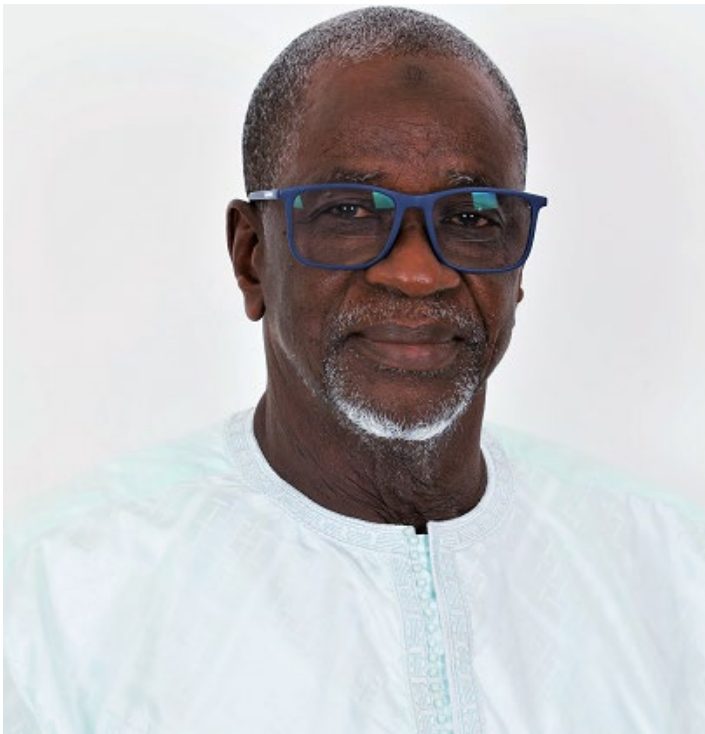
His career reflects a steadfast commitment to climate resilience and collective well-being.

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Hon. Musa S. DRAMMEH

*Minister of Fisheries,
Water Resources and National
Assembly Matters* **Gambia**

Since his appointment on 4 May 2022, Hon. Musa S. DRAMMEH has established himself as a strong advocate for maritime sovereignty and sustainable fisheries governance.

As Minister of Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters, he oversees a strategic portfolio central to food security, employment, and the resilience of Gambian coastal communities.

His tenure has been marked by ambitious structural reforms aimed at restoring national control over marine resources.

In 2025, he made the historic decision not to renew the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the European Union, signaling a shift toward more autonomous and protective management of Gambian waters.

He also led a major overhaul of the fishing licensing system, doubling access fees and significantly increasing levies on fishmeal factories, while extending the industrial fishing limit from 7 to 9 nautical miles to safeguard artisanal fishers.

Under his leadership, 20 fully equipped artisanal fishing vessels were built and distributed to coastal communities in 2024, promoting youth employment and strengthening local livelihoods.

At the regional level, as Acting President of the Conference of Ministers of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission, he strengthens cooperation against illegal fishing and promotes a transition toward climate-smart fisheries, positioning the sector as a central driver of resilience and sustainable growth.



Capt. William RUTO

*Managing Director of
Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) Kenya*

Captain William RUTO is a seasoned mariner and maritime leader with extensive experience in both private and public sectors.

He began his career in 1991 as a Cadet Marine Deck Officer and later joined Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) as a Deck Officer Trainee Pilot.

A Class 1 Master Mariner (FG) from South Tyneside College, UK, he also holds an MBA in Strategic Management from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

He is an Associate Fellow of the Nautical Institute (AFNI) and a member of the International Harbour Masters Association (IHMA – UK).

As KPA Managing Director, Capt. RUTO has driven re-

markable growth across Kenya's ports. In 2025, the Port of Mombasa handled a record 45.45 million metric tons (+10%), with container traffic reaching 2.11 million TEUs (+5.5%), while transit cargo grew 19.5%. The Port of Lamu achieved unprecedented volumes, processing 799,161 metric tons, and Kisumu Port handled 496,516 metric tons (+55%).

These results reflect strategic initiatives under his leadership, including berth expansions, yard development, modernization of terminal operating systems, gate automation, and acquisition of modern equipment.

Capt. RUTO's vision has strengthened Kenya's ports, boosted regional trade, and set a benchmark for operational excellence in East Africa.



Dr. Fatou DIOUF

*Minister of Fisheries, Maritime
and Port Infrastructure – Senegal
(since 2024) Senegal*

A legal expert specialized in maritime activities law, Madam Fatou DIOUF is a Maritime Affairs Administrator and holds a PhD in Public Law from the Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (UCAD).

Her doctoral thesis focused on the legal aspects of combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in Senegal and was awarded the distinction “Very Honorable with Jury Congratulations.”

With extensive experience within Senegal’s merchant marine and fisheries administrations, she also served for seven years as Technical Advisor in charge of legal affairs to the Ministers responsible for the maritime economy and the environment, contributing to the negotiation of several international and regional agreements in Africa and Europe.

As a lecturer in Public Law at UCAD for two decades, she trained generations of legal and maritime professionals.

Since 2024, she has led key reforms aimed at strengthening fisheries governance, intensifying the fight against IUU fishing, modernizing maritime and port infrastructure, promoting local value addition in fisheries products, and advancing a sustainable and inclusive maritime economy that creates jobs and national wealth.

She was elevated to the rank of Knight of the National Order of the Lion in 2012, embodying a sovereign, strategic, and inclusive vision for Senegal’s maritime development.



Nana Jojo SOLOMON

President of Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC), President of the National Fisheries Association of Ghana (NAFAG) Ghana

Nana Jojo SOLOMON is a leading voice in Ghana’s fisheries sector and currently serves as President of the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCFC).

Elected in July 2023 for a four-year term, he heads a 36-delegate council representing canoe fishers across Ghana’s four coastal regions. He is also President of the National Fisheries Association of Ghana (NAFAG).

A steadfast advocate for sustainable fisheries management, Solomon champions science-based, data-driven policies to restore declining fish stocks.

He has been a strong proponent of enforcing closed seasons for all fishing groups to allow marine resources to regenerate and ensure long-term sector viability.

Widely recognized for his firm stance against Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, he has consistently denounced the practice of “saiko” — the ille-

gal transshipment of fish from industrial trawlers to canoes — warning of its devastating impact on artisanal livelihoods and national food security.

He has also criticized the widespread illegal operations of industrial trawlers in Ghanaian waters, calling for stricter enforcement of existing fisheries laws.

As a key representative of canoe fishers, SOLOMON engages in high-level policy discussions with the Fisheries Commission and the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, and has participated in international platforms such as the UN Ocean Conference.

He collaborates with partners including the Environmental Justice Foundation, USAID’s Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project, and the Ghana Maritime Authority to strengthen compliance, improve safety at sea, and protect the primary source of livelihood for coastal communities.



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Lt. Gen. Osama RABIE

*Chairman and
Managing Director of the
Suez Canal Authority (SCA) Egypt*

Lieutenant General Osama Mounier Mohamed RABIE is Chairman and Managing Director of the Suez Canal Authority (SCA), overseeing one of the world's most strategic maritime corridors.

A 1977 graduate of the Egyptian Naval Academy, he built a distinguished naval career, serving as Commander of the Egyptian Navy from 2015 to 2016 before transitioning to the Suez Canal Authority (SCA) as Vice Chairman and, in 2019, Chairman.

Rabie has led major development and modernization efforts to enhance the Canal's operational capacity, safety, and global competitiveness.

He played a central role in managing the aftermath of the 2021 Ever Given incident, securing a US\$550 million

settlement and reinforcing navigational safeguards.

In 2025, amid the prolonged Red Sea crisis, Rabie spearheaded an intensive global outreach and incentive campaign to restore shipping confidence and traffic through the Canal. Measures included fee incentives of up to 15% for large container vessels and engagement with global insurers and major shipping lines.

These efforts contributed to a steady recovery in vessel transits and reaffirmed the Canal's resilience as a critical artery of global trade.

In recognition of his leadership, he was named among the Top 100 Most Influential Figures in Global Shipping by Lloyd's List in 2025.



Youssef AHOUZI

*Director General of PORTNET S.A.,
President of the African Alliance for
Electronic Commerce (AAEC) Morocco*

State Engineer graduate of École Mohammedia d'Ingénieurs and holder of an Executive MBA from École des Ponts Business School, Youssef AHOUZI is a leading figure in port digitalization in Africa.

As Director General of PORTNET S.A., he has transformed Moroccan ports into “Smart Ports,” leveraging artificial intelligence and Big Data to improve logistics efficiency, reduce costs, and streamline foreign trade. Today, PortNet facilitates over 95% of Morocco’s import-export flows, connecting 42 public institutions and nearly 99,000 users.

In 2025, his impact expanded continent-wide. Elected President of the African Alliance for Electronic Commerce (AAEC), he actively promotes interoperability of African single-window systems, a key pillar for the success of AfCFTA, and positions digitalization as a

sustainability driver, significantly reducing the carbon footprint of port operations through full digitalization of procedures.

Under his leadership, PORTNET S.A. has supported several African nations in implementing digital port systems, launched AI-based solutions such as Tijaya to optimize international trade flows, and received the “Customer Service of the Year” awards in 2025 and 2026.

Through his vision, Youssef AHOUZI directly strengthens maritime trade competitiveness, secures the blue economy, and promotes sustainable and connected development of the African port sector.

He is widely recognized as the architect of continental port digital transformation.



Gilles Fabrice DAVID

*Deputy Minister for Agro-Industry,
Food Security, Blue Economy, and
Fisheries Mauritius*

An environmental engineer graduated from INSA Lyon, Gilles Fabrice DAVID combines technical expertise with strategic vision to drive innovation in Mauritius' blue economy.

Appointed Deputy Minister in November 2024, he quickly turned his ambitions into concrete actions, positioning the Mauritian ocean as a key pillar of the country's sustainable and economic development.

He has led several major initiatives: co-organizing the Ocean Forum 2025, fostering dialogue between fishers, scientists, and investors to develop a regenerative blue economy; launching innovative programs to modernize artisanal fisheries, including social support measures and initiatives promoting "fisher-entrepreneurs"; and

chairing joint committees with the European Union on sustainable fisheries, strengthening surveillance of Mauritian waters and combating illegal fishing.

Under his leadership, Mauritius has also accelerated the adoption of sustainable marine technologies, notably for biofouling management and the development of renewable marine energy, positioning the country as a regional provider of maritime technological solutions.

Fabrice DAVID champions a balanced approach that combines economic growth, social equity for coastal communities, and marine biodiversity preservation, embodying leadership focused on innovation and ocean resilience.



Abubakar DANTSOHO

*Managing Director of the
Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) Nigeria*

Abubakar DANTSOHO is a Nigerian maritime administrator and the 29th Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA).

He joined the NPA in 1992 and built his entire professional career within the Authority, rising through commercial, tariff, and strategic management roles to senior leadership positions.

He notably served as Port Manager of the Onne Port Complex, where he drove sustained growth and strengthened operational efficiency.

He also held the positions of Assistant General Manager at headquarters and Chief of Staff to the Minister of Transportation, consolidating his expertise in port governance and reform implementation.

A recipient of the NPA 25 Years Long Service & Merit Award, he contributed to several landmark consultancy studies and strategic projects for the Authority, including work with Crown Agents on NPA concessions and

joint ventures, the Single Window initiative, and the 25-Year Ports Development Masterplan.

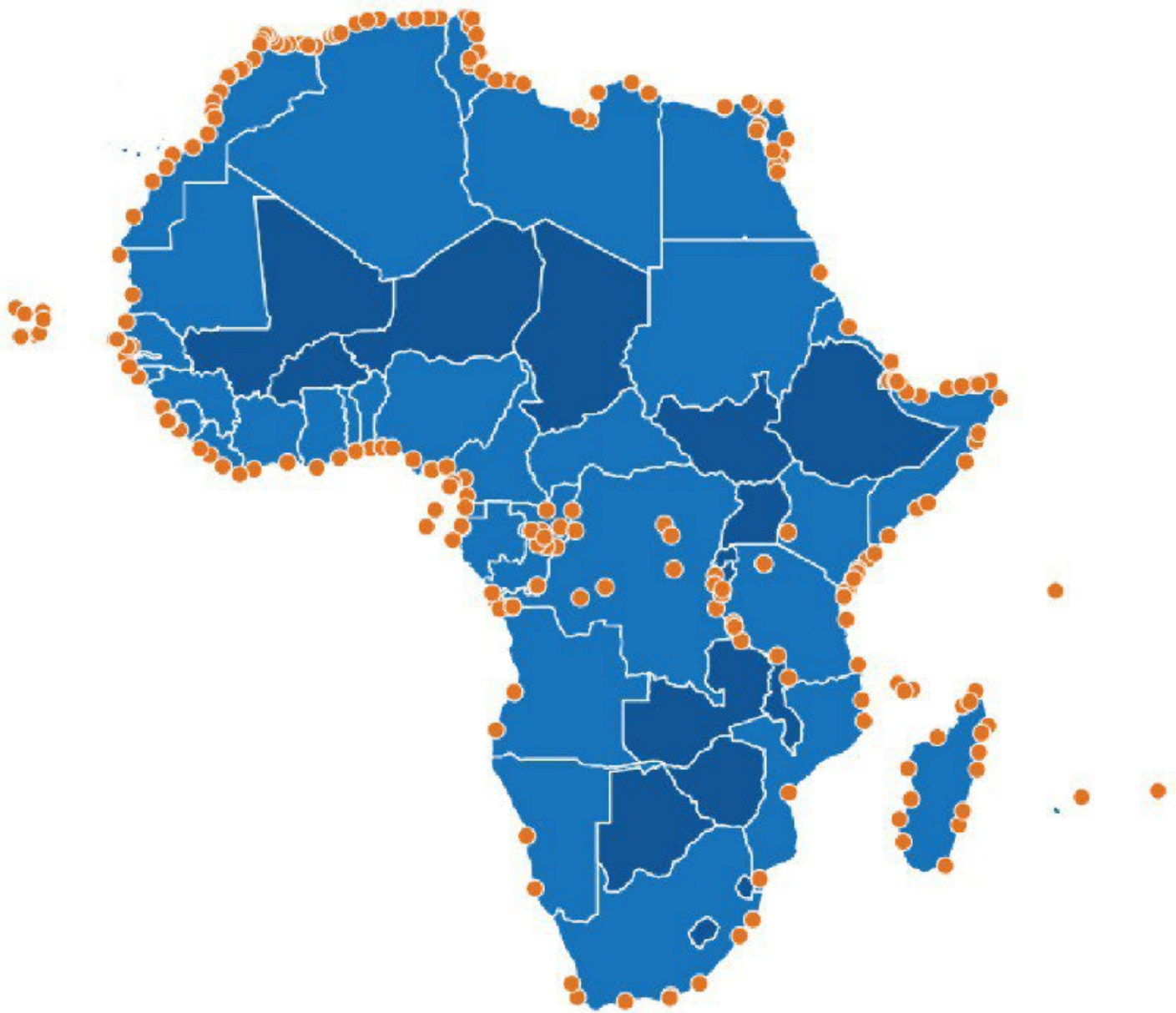
He also participated in studies with the World Bank on private sector participation in integrated transport systems, as well as the Western and Eastern Ports comparative study conducted by Boston Consulting Group.

Since assuming office as Managing Director, he has accelerated infrastructure modernization, digital transformation, and the global competitiveness of Nigerian ports.

In 2025, he was elected Vice President for Africa of the International Association of Ports and Harbours and became the first Nigerian to chair the Port Management Association of West & Central Africa.

In December 2025, he received the Award of Excellence for Maritime Infrastructure Modernisation, further affirming his pivotal role in advancing Africa's Blue Economy.

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Carmen do Sacramento Neto

*Minister of Fisheries
and Marine Resources Angola*

Carmen do Sacramento NETO has served as Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Angola since 16 September 2022.

She leads the strategic transformation of Angola's fisheries sector, with a strong focus on sustainable resource management, aquaculture development, and the empowerment of coastal communities.

In January 2025, she marked a major milestone for marine conservation by signing the High Seas Treaty at the United Nations Headquarters in New York— a landmark international agreement aimed at protecting and sustainably managing marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This step positioned Angola as a committed actor in global ocean governance.

Under her leadership, cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been further strengthened, notably through the Country Programming Framework 2024–2028, aligned with Angola's National Development Plan 2023–2027 and Angola 2050 Vision.

This partnership supports fisheries modernization, climate resilience, food security, and the development of inclusive value chains.

A strong advocate of a sustainable Blue Economy, Carmen do Sacramento NETO promotes an integrated vision where environmental stewardship, innovation, and social inclusion converge to build a competitive and resilient maritime and fisheries sector in Africa.



Christian Armel NKOU

Director General of the Merchant Marine Congo

A key figure in maritime governance in Congo, Christian Armel NKOU is a Maritime Affairs Administrator trained at the École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature (ENAM) in Brazzaville and the Maritime Affairs Administration School in Nantes.

He also holds a certificate in port management from the Port Training Institute of the National Ports Agency of Casablanca, Morocco.

Appointed Director General of the Merchant Marine on January 8, 2021, he has led a major transformation of the sector, culminating in 2025 with the creation of the Congolese Maritime Affairs Agency (ACAM), a public institution with financial autonomy designed to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of Congo's maritime sector.

He also holds strategic roles, serving as President of the Ship Inspection Commission and the Port Handling Inspection Commission, actively contributing to strengthening safety, security, and compliance standards within the sector.

As a qualified auditor under the IMO Member State Au-

dit Scheme, he supports the assessment and improvement of national maritime governance systems in line with international standards.

He also serves as a Category A Board Member of the Société Congolaise des Transports Maritimes (SO-COTRAM), the national shipping line.

Committed to knowledge transfer and capacity building, he served as patron of the 9th cohort (2024–2025) of the Master's program in Maritime and Ocean Activities Law and Security, delivered by the Institut de Sécurité Maritime Interrégional (ISMI) of the Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer (ARSTM), in partnership with the University of Nantes.

He also served as Chairman of the Committee of Experts of MOWCA (2023–2025).

A manager attentive to the development of his teams, he promotes skills enhancement and the inclusion of young people and women, contributing to the emergence of a new generation of maritime stakeholders in Africa.



Pr. Amelie LANDY SOAMBOLA

Committed expert in the sustainable management of marine resources Madagascar

Professor LANDY SOAMBOLA Amelie is a marine science specialist whose career is fully aligned with the development of the blue economy in Madagascar.

A lecturer-researcher at the University of Antsiranana since 2009, she plays a key role in building national capacity in marine sciences, contributing to the development of essential local expertise for the sustainable management of ocean resources.

Since 2016, she has led the Marine Sciences program, strengthening the alignment between academic training and the needs of the maritime sector.

Between 2014 and 2016, as Regional Director of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources for the DIANA region, she coordinated strategic institutions such as USTA, CSP, and ASH, contributing to improved monitoring of fishing activities, maritime surveillance, and the sanitary management of fishery products.

Through her work as a consultant since 2009, she has supported several fishing organizations on key issues including socio-bio-ecological monitoring, stakeholder structuring, and sustainability awareness.

In 2018, she founded the NGO Monde Au Développement Adapté (MADA), which led to the establishment of a Marine Protected Area in the Bay of Diego-Suarez and the Emerald Sea.

This initiative contributes to the conservation of marine ecosystems while supporting the livelihoods of local communities.

In 2025, she began engaging in the marine products processing sector.

Through her academic, institutional, and community engagements, she actively contributes to a sustainable and inclusive blue economy in Madagascar.



Imed ZAMMIT

Shipping Consultant and Tunisia's representative for the WestMED Blue Economy Initiative Tunisia

With over 32 years of experience in transport, logistics, and maritime safety, Imed ZAMMIT stands as a leading figure in the governance and transformation of maritime systems across the Mediterranean and Africa.

Since 2023, he has been working as a transport and logistics consultant, while also serving as Tunisia's representative for the WestMED Blue Economy Initiative.

He is actively involved in capacity building as a trainer and academic advisor at the Mediterranean Institute of Maritime Professions, and serves as an arbitrator at the Paris Maritime Arbitration Chamber.

As former CEO of the Tunisian Navigation Company (2020–2023), he led a strategic transformation focused on fleet modernization, digitalization, and improved financial performance.

Prior to this, he served as Director General of the Mediterranean Institute of Maritime Professions (2015–

2020), where he strengthened international partnerships and led major projects funded by the European Commission.

His career also includes heading the Merchant Marine and Ports Authority in Tunisia, where he initiated key port modernization projects, notably at the Port of Radès.

At the African Union Commission (2007–2011), he contributed to the development of the African Maritime Transport Charter and strategies to enhance maritime safety across the continent.

He also contributed within the European Union to the revision of trans-European transport networks and the implementation of the EU–Africa infrastructure partnership.

Through his extensive expertise, Imed ZAMMIT actively contributes to shaping a more integrated, innovative, and sustainable maritime sector.

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Patrice MELOM

*Managing Director of the
Port Authority of Kribi (PAK) Cameroon*

Patrice MELOM is a leading figure in Central Africa's blue economy and the driving force behind the development of the Port Authority of Kribi (PAK), which he has led since its creation in 2016.

A trained statistician-economist, he represents a new generation of builders who have successfully transformed a strategic infrastructure project into a sustainable engine of national growth.

Under his leadership, the PAK has experienced remarkable growth, becoming the second-largest contributor to Cameroon's customs revenues. These increased from CFAF 2 billion in 2017 to nearly CFAF 300 billion in 2024, reaching between CFAF 335 and 350 billion in 2025—accounting for approximately 29% of national customs revenues.

Since operations began in 2018, the port has generated over CFAF 1,228 billion in cumulative revenues. Operationally, the port handled 559 vessels in 2025 (up from 412 in 2024) and processed 555,000 TEUs, representing

an increase of more than 80% in just one year.

The year 2025 marked a major milestone with the commissioning of Phase II of the port's expansion, tripling its capacity. The quay length now exceeds 1,300 meters, with a projected annual capacity of 1 to 1.2 million TEUs. The arrival of the mega container ship MSC Türkiye symbolized Kribi's entry into the league of major global ports.

Beyond infrastructure, Patrice MELOM is advancing an ambitious industrial vision through the Kribi Port Industrial Zone (KPIZ), a 4,000-hectare zone expected to generate up to 150,000 jobs and accelerate local value addition.

He is also overseeing the development of a strategic mineral terminal to support Cameroon's mining sector.

Through digitalization, logistics innovation, and strong international partnerships, he is positioning Kribi as a key logistics and industrial hub in Africa.



Dr. Raissa-Julie ADA ALLOGO

*Principal Maritime and Inland
Water Transport Policy Officer*

She holds a PhD. in Industrial Economics from University of Lille 1 in France, where she specialized in transport policy and regional integration.

With over 15 years of experience in transport and economic development, she has built a distinguished career advancing sustainable transport systems across Africa.

She has more than a decade of experience advising Member States of the African Union (AU) and collaborating with leading international and regional institutions, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD), German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the International Transport Forum (ITF), and the European Union (EU).

Her work focuses on advancing transport policies across the continent through the implementation of continental programmes and action plans.

In 2025, she has played a pivotal role in promoting the ratification and accelerating the entry into force of the revised African Maritime Transport Charter a key milestone for Africa's maritime agenda.

She places particular emphasis on maritime transport and port development, supporting sustainable port infrastructure, decarbonization strategies, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Through strong advocacy and technical engagement with AU Member States, she has contributed to aligning maritime policy reforms with Africa's broader climate and trade ambitions under Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

She currently serves as Principal Maritime and Inland Water Transport Policy Officer, where she continues to shape strategic frameworks that strengthen Africa's maritime governance, enhance regional integration, and support sustainable economy development.



Cyrus NGO'O

*Managing Director of the
Port Authority of Douala (PAD) Cameroon*

A civil administrator and graduate of ENAM (Class of 1998), holding an MBA from the Université du Québec à Montréal, Cyrus NGO'O has been the Director General of the Port Authority of Douala (PAD)—the country's leading port platform—since 2016.

With a career rooted at the heart of the state apparatus, notably as an advisor to the Prime Minister on strategic public policies, he took over the leadership of the PAD at a time marked by congestion and underperformance. He has since driven a “new dynamic” focused on performance and operational sovereignty.

His structural reform began in 2017 with the creation of autonomous entities to regain control over key activities: container terminal operations, dredging, towage, and real estate.

This strategy has delivered tangible results, including reduced vessel waiting times, improved traffic flow, and lower logistics costs. The dredging unit has sustainably

rehabilitated the access channel, notably through the removal of 25 historic wrecks. The towage unit (RDR) also illustrates this success, generating revenues of FCFA 7.263 billion between 2021 and 2025—more than double the FCFA 3.389 billion generated by the former concessionaire over 17 years.

At the same time, over FCFA 44 billion was invested between 2020 and 2024 to modernize port equipment and accelerate digitalization (BIM, dematerialization).

This momentum is supported by major projects: expansion of the container terminal (target of 1 million TEUs by 2030), a bulk terminal valued at FCFA 280 billion, and the development of a 517-hectare industrial-port zone in Dibamba.

Through performance-driven and innovation-oriented governance, Cyrus NGO'O is sustainably repositioning the Port of Douala as a strategic logistics hub in Central Africa.



Dr. Dominique Candide F. KOUMOU BOULAS

Director General of the Congolese Shippers' Council (CSC) Congo

Director General of the Congolese Shippers' Council (CSC) since 2023, he embodies a new generation of leaders dedicated to modernizing supply chains and facilitating trade across Africa.

Holding a PhD in Management Sciences and specializing in transport and logistics from the École Supérieure Robert de Sorbon (France), he possesses a high-level academic background, further complemented by a Master's in Logistics Management and an MBA in Corporate Governance.

As a career professional within the institution, he rose through the ranks of the CSC, developing deep expertise in port operations, multimodal transport, and transit corridors.

Under his leadership, the CSC has undergone a significant transformation with a strategic repositioning focused on shipper assistance, logistics cost management, and trade fluidity enhancement.

He has also strengthened the Council's institutional visibility and its role in regulating and improving the performance of Congo's foreign trade.

Highly active on the continental stage, he was elected President of the Union of African Shippers' Councils (UASC) in 2025, after serving as Vice-President in 2023.

In 2024, his expertise was recognized at the highest level when he was appointed as an expert to the National Committee for the Facilitation and Simplification of Port Transit and Corridors.

In addition to these roles, he presides over the Association of Congolese Logisticians (ALC) and serves as Chairman of the Board of the Centre TRAINMAR in Pointe-Noire, contributing actively to the development of professional skills and capacity building within the sector.



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Rym Benzina BOURGUIBA

*President of "La Saison Bleue",
Director of the "Forum Mondial de
la Mer-Bizerte" Tunisia*

A graduate of the Tunis School of Art and Decoration, she established a recognized expertise in marketing and consultancy before dedicating herself to the maritime cause.

Convinced of the urgent need to integrate sustainable development into the management of the Tunisian coastline, she co-founded "La Saison Bleue" in 2018, assuming its presidency in 2020.

As Director of the "Forum Mondial de la Mer-Bizerte", she has positioned the continent at the heart of global ocean governance challenges.

Her continental influence crystallized in 2023 with the launch, in partnership with the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco, of the Blue Africa Summit in Tangier.

This summit has become a regular gathering to shape the future of the sea in Africa within the framework of a sustainable blue economy and a peaceful maritime space.

During UNOC3 in 2025, she reached a new milestone with the "Africa Blue Compass (ABC)", a strategic pact aimed at transforming the continent's maritime potential into concrete development opportunities.

In parallel, she co-organized the "Wo-men Actions for the Ocean (WAO)" initiative to highlight innovative solutions led by women in the face of climate challenges.

Beyond her actions in Africa, she created "La Grande Marée," the first major maritime festival in Paris dedicated to public awareness, further promoting maritime culture on an international stage.

A seasoned entrepreneur and board member of "Réseau Entreprendre" and "French Tech Tunisie", Rym Benzina today combines political influence, technical expertise, and passion to build a resilient and prosperous African maritime trajectory.



Jorge SANTOS

Minister of the Sea Cabo Verde

Jorge SANTOS is the current Minister of the Sea of the Republic of Cabo Verde, appointed in 2024 following a cabinet reshuffle.

In this strategic role for a nation where nearly 99% of the territory is maritime, he oversees policies related to the blue economy, fisheries, maritime tourism, and ocean protection.

A former President of the National Assembly (2016–2021), he now embodies the archipelago's maritime ambition and international projection.

Under his leadership, the maritime sector has established itself as a pillar of the national economy, representing more than 20% of the GDP.

He works to modernize port infrastructures operated by ENAPOR, strengthen maritime security, and position Cabo Verde as a logistical and scientific hub, notably through the internationalization of the Mindelo

Oceanographic Center in partnership with German and American institutions.

As the architect of a sustainable blue economy, Jorge SANTOS supports the transition toward responsible fishing, the modernization of the Cabnave shipyards, and the improvement of living conditions for artisanal fishing communities.

On the diplomatic front, he plays an active role in regional and international dynamics, strengthening cooperation with African partners, including Senegal, as well as with Europe and Japan.

A committed promoter of blue finance, he advocates for the use of Blue Bonds to fund the preservation of marine ecosystems while supporting food security.

His vision, combining technical rigor with a Pan-African commitment, makes him a key player in sustainable development and the blue economy in Africa.



Adv. Modjadji Phyllis DIFETO

*Acting Chief Executive of
Transnet National Ports
Authority (TNPA) South Africa*

Advocate Modjadji Phyllis DIFETO is a distinguished maritime executive whose leadership reached a pivotal milestone in 2025.

Throughout that year, serving as the Acting Chief Executive of Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA), she masterfully navigated South Africa's national ports system through a transformative era.

Her tenure was defined by the successful execution of the National Ports Act, leading the Executive Team to enhance infrastructure standards and drive financial sustainability.

Notably, she pioneered disruptive event mitigation strategies, integrating climate resilience into the logistics ecosystem to protect vital trade operations from extreme weather.

Building on this momentum, Adv. DIFETO transitioned

in December 2025 to her role as Managing Executive for the Western Region.

In this capacity, she provides strategic oversight for the critical ports of Cape Town, Saldanha, Mossel Bay, and Port Nolloth, focusing on operational excellence and localized strategies to optimize the global supply chain.

Her executive prowess is complemented by influential roles in regional governance. As Chairperson of the Port Management Association for the Eastern & Southern Africa Region (PMAESA) and the Women in the Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa (WOMESA) SA Chapter, she remains at the forefront of maritime safety and gender advocacy.

A specialized Advocate and trained IMO Auditor, she also contributes her expertise to the BRICS Institute Advisory Board and the BRICS Business Council Secretariat.



Iroghama OGBEIFUN

Managing Director & CEO of Starzs Investments Company Limited Nigeria

As the Managing Director of Starzs Investments Company Limited, Iroghama OGBEIFUN has established herself as a leading figure in West African offshore logistics.

Under her leadership, the company expanded its fleet from three vessels in 2014 to eleven in 2021, consolidating its strategic role with global oil majors.

Far more than a title holder, she is a hands-on leader, directly involved in the company's operations and strategic direction. She also serves as the Chairperson of the Technical Committee of the Shipowners Association of Nigeria (SOAN).

The year 2025 marked a decisive milestone in her career when she was appointed to the Governing Board of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), a testament to her influence in Nigeria's maritime governance.

Also serving as the Vice Chairperson of Starzs Gas Limited, this serial entrepreneur has a career distinguished by prestigious accolades. Following her recognition as Outstanding Female Entrepreneur in 2021, she re-

ceived three distinctions in 2022: Most Respected CEO in Nigeria (Maritime Category), Amazon of the Maritime Industry, and the Oil Industry Trendsetter Award. In 2023, she was honored with the Peak Performing Woman Award and named Business Leader of the Year by the International Achievements Research Centre.

The year 2024 brought further success with the Rising Star Award at NOG Energy Week, the Entrepreneur of the Year for Business Expansion at the 9th Annual Nigeria Credit Industry Awards, and the Female Entrepreneur of the Year title at the Global Entrepreneurship Festival. In 2025, she received the Women in Leadership Award for female empowerment at the Nigeria Oil and Gas Opportunity Fair (NOGOF).

A staunch advocate for inclusion, she leverages her position to drive the integration of female seafarers and officers on board vessels; her company currently has a female engineer and a female vessel captain in active service.

She is also a patron, affiliate, or member of several prestigious organizations dedicated to women's empowerment.



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Prasheen MAHARAJ

*Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of
Sandock Austral Shipyards South Africa*

Prasheen MAHARAJ is a leading figure in the maritime and industrial sectors of Southern Africa.

As the CEO of Sandock Austral Shipyards, he oversees the largest shipyard in Southern Africa, with extensive operations spanning Africa, Europe, and India.

Under his leadership, the company has evolved from a single site in Durban into a global group, featuring strategic investments in marine engineering, energy, and emerging technologies, notably Agentic AI.

Renowned for his ability to structure and secure complex multi-billion Rand projects, he has established himself as an expert in industrial transformation and corporate turnaround initiatives.

A specialist in demanding environments, he excels in managing complex and adverse situations, demonstrating remarkable resilience and execution capabilities. His background in corporate finance and investment has enabled him to successfully lead large-scale mer-

gers, acquisitions, and capital-raising operations.

As a committed leader, he served until August 2025 as the President of the Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the largest chamber of commerce in South Africa. He also chairs the Maritime Industry Development Network Task Force, actively contributing to the structuring and growth of the national maritime sector.

His leadership has been recognized through numerous distinctions, including his induction into the South African Shipping Hall of Fame in 2024 and his recognition as the country's inaugural Blue Economy Champion in 2022.

An unashamed advocate of Conscious Capitalism, Prasheen MAHARAJ promotes a vision where economic performance is coupled with a positive social impact, placing the maritime industry at the heart of sustainable development and continental transformation.



Celso ROSAS

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Port of Lobito Angola

Celso ROSAS is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Port of Lobito, one of Angola's most vital strategic ports and a key link in the Lobito Corridor connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the heart of the continent.

In this position, he plays a central role in the governance, strategic direction, and modernization of port operations.

His leadership is part of a profound transformation of the port, marked by sustained efforts in infrastructure modernization, operational efficiency improvements, and the strengthening of logistical competitiveness.

Under his impetus, the Port of Lobito has continued to optimize its cargo handling capacities, with a particular focus on streamlining supply chains, digitalizing terminals, and enhancing the performance of port services.

He has also contributed to positioning the port as a strategic regional logistics hub, specifically within the framework of the Lobito Corridor development, designed to facilitate trade between Angola and the region's landlocked countries.

This strategic direction has increased the port's attractiveness to international investors and partners while consolidating its role in regional economic integration.

In parallel, his mandate emphasizes port governance, operational safety, and the sustainability of activities, with a commitment to balancing traffic growth and logistical efficiency with compliance with international standards.

Through this approach, Celso ROSAS is helping to establish the Port of Lobito as a leading logistics platform in Southern Africa, serving regional trade and Angola's economic ambitions.



Nirmal Jivan SHAH

*Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of
Nature Seychelles Seychelles*

Nirmal Jivan SHAH is a leading environmentalist and a recognized innovator with several decades of experience in marine conservation and sustainable development.

Dubbed "The Coral Man" (New African magazine) and "Mr. Coastal Zone" (Seychelles Review), he has spearheaded major initiatives across the Western Indian Ocean, contributing significantly to the advancement of marine science, biodiversity conservation, and integrated coastal zone management.

As the head of Nature Seychelles, he has overseen the implementation of award-winning, internationally funded projects addressing key issues such as sustainable fisheries management, climate change adaptation, and the protection of marine ecosystems.

A pioneer in the introduction and dissemination of tools such as Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), he played a decisive role in shaping public policy and regulatory frameworks in the Seychelles, notably through

the National Biodiversity Action Plan.

An influential advisor and committed diplomat, he has represented the Seychelles at numerous international conferences on sustainable development and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

His expertise is regularly sought by international institutions such as the World Bank, UNESCO, and UNEP, and he is recognized as a thought leader in fields such as the blue economy, ecotourism, and nature-based solutions.

In 2025, his exceptional journey was officially honored by the Seychellois state with the award of the prestigious Medal of Honour by the President of the Republic of Seychelles.

This distinction crowns a career marked by visionary leadership, a constant commitment to civil society—notably through his role as chairman of LUNGOS—and vital contributions to the preservation of the Seychelles' natural heritage.



Honorato Evita OMA

*Minister of Transport, Telecommunications,
and Artificial Intelligence Systems, **Equatorial
Guinea***

Honorato Evita OMA is the Minister of Transport, Telecommunications, and Artificial Intelligence Systems of Equatorial Guinea, and one of the rising figures in the maritime transformation of Central Africa.

In early 2026, he was appointed 2nd Vice-President of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), consolidating his role in regional maritime governance.

Known as Central Africa's "Mr. Corridor," he has profoundly reoriented the national port strategy toward a logic of regional integration. He has spearheaded strategic agreements with landlocked hinterland countries, notably the development of the Bata–N'Djamena corridor, which included the allocation of 30 hectares dedicated to Chadian goods.

He also led the maritime and land transit agreement signed in 2025 with the Central African Republic (CAR), aimed at providing the country with access to the sea via Equatorial Guinean infrastructure. This initiative is further supported by a strategic 200-hectare site located at the tripartite border between CAR, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea, reserved for the construction of

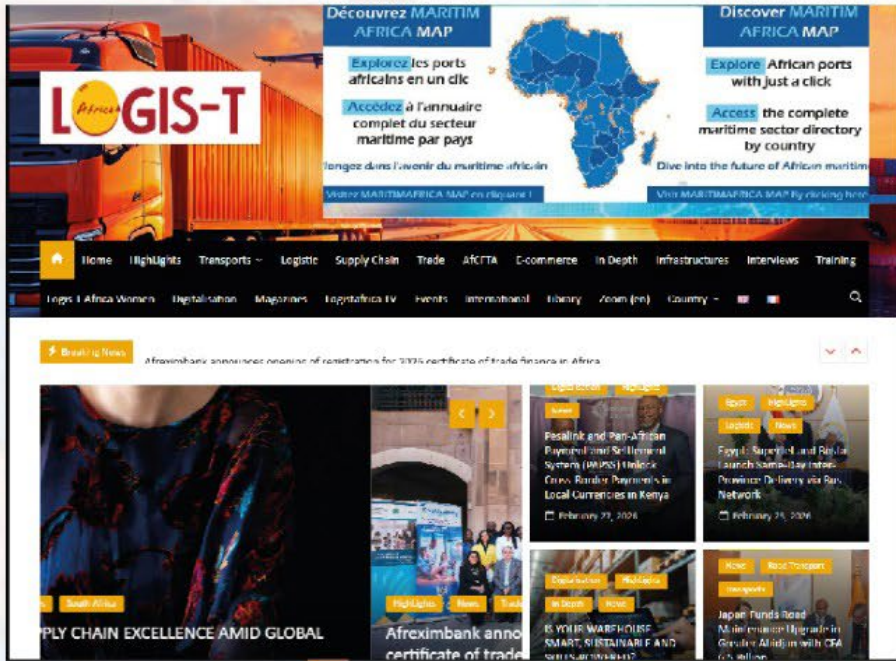
a future dry port.

An architect of major reforms, Honorato Evita OMA also steered the signature of a 25-year strategic concession contract with the Albayrak Group for the modernization and operation of the ports of Malabo and Bata. This partnership serves as a central lever to improve port performance and support the country's economic diversification.

On a regional level, he has strengthened Equatorial Guinea's maritime positioning by facilitating its accession to the Abuja MoU, a key framework for Port State Control and maritime safety.

He has also intensified cooperation with MOWCA to promote security in the Gulf of Guinea and foster the integration of maritime markets.

Through a vision combining infrastructure, port diplomacy, and innovation, Honorato Evita OMA has established himself as a key player in the development of an integrated, competitive, and forward-looking blue economy in Central Africa.



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Florentine GUIHARD-KOIDIO

*Expert in Port Information Systems,
Chair of the Strategic Monitoring Committee
of the NPWMP-WCA Côte d'Ivoire*

Florentine GUIHARD-KOIDIO is an Expert in Port Information Systems, an Associate Researcher at CREM-POL, a Training Expert for UNCTAD's TrainForTrade program, and since 2024, Chair of the Strategic Monitoring Committee of the Network of Professional Women in the Maritime and Port Sectors for West and Central Africa (NPWMP-WCA).

A computer engineer by training, Florentine has spent her entire career in the port sector at the Port Authority of Abidjan, where she notably served as head of the IT department. Her expertise is also recognized within PMAWCA, where she chaired the Operations, Safety, and Environment Committee from 2009 to 2012.

A long-time advocate for women's leadership, she helped establish NPWMP-WCA in 2007 and led the network from October 2017 to August 2024.

Under her leadership, the network received the Inter-

national "Gender and Development" Award from the Government of Gran Canaria (Spain) in 2021.

Through her work, she has promoted capacity building, visibility, and recognition for women in the maritime and port sectors.

In 2023, at the PMAWCA Council in Lagos, she was honored as the woman who contributed most to advancing and highlighting the role of women in West and Central Africa's maritime and port industries.

Now retired, she continues to actively support the port sector and women's empowerment.

An Officer of the Ivorian Order of Maritime Merit, she embodies an inclusive and transformative vision for African port development.



Cheikh Ahmedou SIDI

*Director General of the Agence Mauritanienne des Affaires Maritimes (AMAM) **Mauritania***

Cheikh Ahmedou SIDI is the Director General of the Mauritanian Maritime Affairs Agency (AMAM), a key institution for maritime governance in Mauritania.

In this strategic role, he leads the implementation of national policies regarding maritime security, shipping regulation, and the development of the national flag.

Under his leadership, AMAM has embarked on a modernization process aimed at strengthening compliance with international standards, improving the monitoring of maritime activities, and securing Mauritanian territorial waters.

He is particularly focused on optimizing vessel inspection systems, professionalizing sector stakeholders, and enhancing institutional capacity.

Cheikh Ahmedou SIDI also plays an active role in promoting Mauritania as a credible player in regional maritime transport by supporting the development of a competitive maritime registry and facilitating exchanges with international partners.

His efforts contribute to structuring a maritime environment that is safer, more transparent, and conducive to investment.

Through a rigorous approach aligned with global standards, he is driving the development of Mauritania's maritime potential, linking it to the broader challenges of security, trade, and sustainable development in West Africa.



Sony François PAYET

*Chief Executive Officer of the Seychelles
Ports Authority (SPA) Seychelles*

Sony François PAYET is a seasoned civil engineer and accomplished executive with extensive experience in construction, infrastructure development, and maritime operations.

His multidisciplinary background has enabled him to develop strong competencies in engineering design, project management, and large-scale infrastructure delivery.

In 2020, he transitioned into consultancy as a Project Manager, further strengthening his expertise in strategic project delivery and infrastructure planning. His accumulated experience across engineering, operations, and executive management positioned him as a natural leader in the maritime sector.

On July 1, 2022, he was appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Seychelles Ports Authority (SPA), and his mandate was renewed in 2025 in recognition of his leadership and results-driven approach.

Under his stewardship, the SPA has accelerated its modernization agenda, notably through the launch and implementation of the Port Victoria Management Information System (PVMIS) in March 2023. This flagship digital transformation project, long embedded in SPA's strategic plan, aims to replace manual processes with an integrated digital platform for port operations, in alignment with International Maritime Organization standards and national digitalization policies.

In addition to his national responsibilities, he serves as 1st Vice Chairman of the PMAESA Board of Directors, contributing to regional cooperation among ports in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Known for his strong decision-making abilities, analytical mindset, and capacity to manage complex organizations, Sony PAYET is widely recognized as a transformative leader driving the modernization, efficiency, and long-term strategic positioning of Seychelles' port infrastructure.



Lancinet KEITA

*Director General of the Guinean Shippers' Council, Vice-President of the Union of African Shippers' Councils **Guinea***

A high-level expert in international law, governance, and security, Lancinet KEITA has led the Guinean Shippers' Council (CGC) since July 2023.

Previously serving as Chief of Staff at the Ministry of Justice and Director of International Law at the Ministry of Defense, he has built a career at the intersection of public policy and trade facilitation.

His leadership took on a continental dimension in July 2025 with his election as Vice-President of the Union of African Shippers' Councils (UASC) during the General Assembly in Pointe-Noire.

Under his leadership, the CGC has transformed into a proactive institution dedicated to Guinean competitiveness.

Lancinet KEITA has driven unprecedented moderniza-

tion, highlighted by the launch of the "Maison du Chargeur" (Shippers' House) and an exhaustive mapping of storage infrastructure across Greater Conakry.

He consistently leads strategic missions to Burkina Faso, Mali, and Nigeria to revitalize road corridors and remove obstacles to the free movement of goods and people.

His management is further defined by a deep digital transformation, illustrated by the historic interconnection between Customs and the Electronic Cargo Tracking Note (ECTN) platform, which is now applied to the strategic mineral ports of Boffa and Boké.

By establishing the inaugural Guinean Shippers' Days and investing heavily in the technical capacity building of his staff, he has instilled a culture of excellence and performance within the organization.



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Adegboyega OYETOLA

*Minister of Marine and
Blue Economy Nigeria*

Adegboyega OYETOLA is the current Minister of Marine and Blue Economy of Nigeria, a position he has held since August 2023.

At the helm of this strategic portfolio, he plays a central role in structuring and accelerating Nigeria's blue economy, a key lever for economic diversification.

His leadership is marked by tangible results. Within two years, the ministry achieved a 75% performance rate, according to an official evaluation by the Office of the Special Adviser to the President, demonstrating effective implementation despite significant institutional challenges.

On the financial front, agencies under his supervision recorded a spectacular 160% growth in revenue, rising from 700.79 billion naira in 2023 to 1.83 trillion naira in 2025, thanks to reforms focused on transparency, digitalization, strengthened regulation, and loss reduction.

Adegboyega OYETOLA is also driving a structural transformation of the maritime sector, including the modernization of existing ports, the development of new deep-sea ports, and the ambition to position Nigeria as a leading maritime hub in West and Central Africa.

He is leading major initiatives such as the relaunch of a national maritime carrier in partnership with international stakeholders and the operationalization of the Cabotage Vessel Financing Fund.

In the fisheries sector, he supports increased local production and the development of dedicated infrastructure.

Carrying a sustainable and inclusive vision, he promotes collaborative governance aimed at maximizing the potential of marine resources while strengthening Nigeria's competitiveness on the global maritime stage.



Momade Arnaldo JUÍZO

*Secretary of State for the Sea
and Fisheries* **Mozambique**

Momade Arnaldo JUÍZO has served as the Secretary of State for the Sea and Fisheries of Mozambique since February 2025.

In this strategic role, he has emerged as a key figure in the transformation of Mozambique's blue economy, with a strong focus on sustainability, governance, and the optimization of marine resources.

Since taking office, he has spearheaded strategic reforms aimed at strengthening fisheries governance, notably through the deployment of Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) systems to combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing—a scourge that causes significant annual economic losses to the country.

In parallel, he is actively working to develop the aquaculture sector by supporting the entire value chain,

from input certification to the improvement of financing mechanisms and licensing procedures.

A staunch advocate for an integrated blue economy, Momade Arnaldo Juízo promotes the role of the Blue Economy Development Fund (ProAzul) to stimulate high-potential sectors such as sustainable tourism, maritime transport, and marine energy.

He is also distinguished by his commitment to marine environmental protection, drawing attention to the impact of plastic pollution and the urgent need for sustainable waste management.

Through a collaborative approach involving both the public and private sectors, he embodies a new leadership dynamic focused on a resilient, inclusive blue economy that generates sustainable growth.



Andrew KANIME

*Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Namibian Ports Authority (Namport) **Namibia***

Andrew KANIME is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Namibian Ports Authority (Namport), a central player in Namibia's port development.

Reappointed in 2025 for a second five-year term, he embodies strategic continuity built on performance and the transformation of the national logistics sector.

Since his initial appointment in November 2020, Andrew KANIME has consolidated Namport's position as a key logistics hub in Southern Africa by strengthening regional integration and expanding the institution's footprint across maritime and land transport chains.

Under his leadership, the port authority has sustained its efforts in modernization, operational optimization, and increasing attractiveness for both regional and international trade flows.

With over 25 years of professional experience, including 17 years in executive leadership roles, he possesses

a robust background at the intersection of human resources, finance, and infrastructure.

Before joining Namport, he held strategic positions within major Namibian institutions, notably at FirstRand Namibia Group, as well as Telecom Namibia, the Development Bank of Namibia, and NamPower.

He holds an MBA from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, an Honours Degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Namibia, and a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management.

He has also distinguished himself as a member of several boards of directors, contributing to institutional governance and development.

His leadership continues to play a decisive role in positioning Namibia as a competitive regional logistics platform.



Aboubaker Omar HADI

Chairman of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA) Djibouti

Aboubaker Omar HADI is one of the key architects behind the logistics transformation of the Horn of Africa.

As Chairman of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA) and Great Horn Investment Holding (GHIH), he leads an ambitious strategy to position Djibouti as a critical multimodal hub linking Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

He holds academic training in transport and logistics from the World Maritime University in Sweden and the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM) in Le Havre, France, giving him strong technical and strategic expertise.

He began his career in 1992 at the Port of Djibouti as Director of Operations, later serving in key roles including Container Terminal Director and Commercial Director.

He played a pivotal role in the development of the

Doraleh Port, a major infrastructure capable of handling over 1.5 million containers annually, helping establish Djibouti as a leading regional logistics platform.

His international experience also includes managing the Tin Can Island Terminal in Nigeria, strengthening his footprint in African port operations.

Under his leadership, Djibouti has accelerated the development of strategic logistics corridors, particularly with Ethiopia, while expanding its port, rail, and free zone infrastructure.

Through GHIH, he drives high-impact investments across maritime, aviation, and logistics sectors, reinforcing the country's strategic position in global trade.

A member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT), Aboubaker Omar HADI embodies visionary leadership advancing regional integration and Africa's blue economy.



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Dr. Brice Koumba MABERT

*Director General of Fisheries
and Aquaculture **Gabon***

Brice Koumba MABERT is a renowned expert in applied oceanography, fisheries management, and sustainable development in Gabon.

Holding a PhD in Marine and Coastal Geography from the University of Nantes and serving as a Research Fellow (CAMES), he has for several years spearheaded public policies related to fisheries, aquaculture, and the conservation of marine ecosystems.

As the head of the General Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture, he leads ambitious strategies to modernize Gabon's fisheries sector.

He is distinguished by his leadership in strengthening institutional and technical capacities, supporting local value chains, and integrating sustainable practices to ensure food security and job creation.

His actions aim to structure the entire fisheries and aquaculture value chain while enhancing the resilience

of coastal communities against environmental challenges.

A scientist by training, he has coordinated high-level research on coastal erosion, littoral habitat dynamics, and sea turtle conservation, contributing to scientific knowledge and guiding public policy.

His work, published in international journals, reflects sharp expertise in marine sciences and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

Through his commitment, Brice Koumba MABERT embodies an integrated vision of oceanic development, placing innovation, sustainability, and the optimization of marine resources at the heart of national and regional strategies.

His leadership contributes to positioning Gabon as an influential actor in sustainable ocean governance in Africa.



Baba TALL

*Managing Director of the
"Consortium Sénégalais d'Activités
Maritimes (COSAMA)" Senegal*

Baba Tall is a senior expert in supply chain management and a leading figure in Senegal's maritime and logistics sector.

Holding a Master 2 in Logistics Management and Transport Engineering from the University of Lille, as well as a PhD in Management Sciences from the International University of Dakar, he combines academic rigor with operational expertise and strategic vision.

He built the core of his career within the Maritalia Group, where he evolved over more than two decades.

Joining in 1998 as a ship chandler department head, he became Director of Logistics Operations Services in 2000, before being appointed Managing Director in 2009.

As a central figure in sectoral governance, Baba Tall holds several key positions. Since 2021, he has served as the President of CAP Sénégal, where he coordinates all the activities of the port community to strengthen synergy and sector competitiveness.

He has also been the Vice-President of SEMPOS since 2002, actively contributing to the structuring and advo-

cacy of port handling companies, and has served as the Treasurer General of USETTA since 2019, following his tenure as Secretary General from 2009 to 2019.

His leadership is further demonstrated through the transformation of logistics and port systems. Since 2024, he has chaired the Strategic Orientation and Performance Monitoring Committee of the GUDE, where he leads the strategic vision and digitalization of port procedures.

Since 2021, he has also served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of SIC Sénégal S.A., contributing to the modernization of governance and the company's strategic alignment.

Additionally, he has been a member of the Scientific and Pedagogical Orientation Committee of the Centre Trainmar de Dakar since 2024, playing an active role in analyzing sector needs and designing tailored training programs.

On June 12, 2025, he was appointed Managing Director of COSAMA, marking a major new milestone in his professional journey.



H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali MWINYI

*President of Zanzibar, Chairman
of Revolutionary Council **Zanzibar***

Hussein Ali MWINYI is the 8th President of Zanzibar and one of the African leaders who has transformed the blue economy into a concrete lever for growth and economic sovereignty. Since taking office, he has profoundly restructured the archipelago's economic model around its marine resources, contributing to a growth rate that rose from 1.3% in 2020 to 7.1% in 2024. In 2025, this strategy is bearing full fruit: the blue economy has established itself as the central pillar of Zanzibar's development, representing a significant share of the GDP and generating unprecedented investment and employment dynamics.

His efforts are notably illustrated by the transformation of the fisheries sector, with production more than doubling in four years to reach nearly 79,000 tonnes. This success is supported by modernization programs, targeted financing, and the launch of new investments in fishing and aquaculture. In parallel, the seaweed industry—which has a high female workforce—has emerged as a major driver of social inclusion and large-scale job creation.

Tourism, another pillar of the blue economy, is experiencing remarkable expansion with over 800,000 visitors in 2025, confirming Zanzibar's position as a premier

sustainable tourism destination in Africa. This momentum generates significant revenue and strengthens the archipelago's international appeal.

An infrastructure visionary, Dr. MWINYI has also launched strategic port projects, including the Mangapwani Integrated Port, designed to turn Zanzibar into a regional logistics hub. Furthermore, his 2025–2030 vision relies on human capital development, exemplified by the laying of the foundation stone for the new Institute of Marine Sciences complex in Buyu on January 5, 2025. This project, in partnership with the University of Dar es Salaam, aims to train a new generation of blue economy experts.

Committed to inclusive growth, he actively promotes women's empowerment, particularly within marine value chains, while strengthening access to local economic opportunities.

An influential member of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi and son of former President Ali Hassan MWINYI, Dr. Hussein Ali MWINYI embodies a new generation of African leaders making the blue economy a strategic pillar for transformation, regional integration, and sustainable development.



Abra Kadjogbe OLANLO AFANVI

*Environmental engineer,
Director of the Blue Economy at
the High Council for the Sea Togo*

Abra Kadjogbe OLANLO AFANVI is an environmental engineer and a specialist in ocean governance.

She serves as Director of the Blue Economy at the High Council for the Sea of Togo, where she coordinates national policies and initiatives in support of a sustainable blue economy.

She contributed to the development of Togo's first Report on the State of the Marine Environment as well as the National Strategy for the Sea and the Coastline (SNML) and plays a key role on the Technical Committee for Marine Spatial Planning.

At the regional and international levels, she co-chairs the Blue Economy Working Group of the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea and is a member of the Technical Expert Group on Marine Spatial Planning for the Atlantic Coast of West, Central and Southern Africa (MSP-TEG-ACA), initiated by IOC-UNESCO.

She is also a contributing expert to the United Nations Third World Ocean Assessment, particularly on coastal development, and Vice-Chair of the ECOWAS Mentorship Panel for the BBNJ Agreement.



Maria Sábado Horta FIDALGO

*Fishmonger, Boat
owner Cabo Verde*

In the fishing village of Rincão, on Santiago Island in Cabo Verde, Maria Sábado Horta FIDALGO—affectionately known as Mãezinha—embodies resilience, leadership, and commitment to the blue economy.

At 44, she is a fishmonger, boat owner, and president of her local fishing association, playing a central role in sustaining her community’s livelihoods.

Raised by the sea under the influence of her father, a respected shipowner, Mãezinha developed an early understanding of the economic and social value of fishing.

After his passing in 2011, she fully committed to the sector, determined to carry on his legacy. Despite limited formal education due to health challenges, she has continuously strengthened her skills through training in fish processing, food safety, and entrepreneurship.

In 2019, with support from the Raiz Azul project, she acquired her first boat and gradually expanded her ac-

tivities through strategic reinvestment.

Today, she manages two boats while facing ongoing financial constraints that limit access to equipment and resources.

As a community leader, Mãezinha advocates for stronger support for small-scale fishers and promotes sustainable fishing practices, raising awareness about overfishing and environmental degradation.

She is also committed to empowering women by sharing her experience and encouraging greater female participation in the sector.

Deeply rooted in her community, her vision goes beyond personal success—she aims to create jobs across fisheries, processing, and tourism, contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable blue economy in Cabo Verde.



Français



English



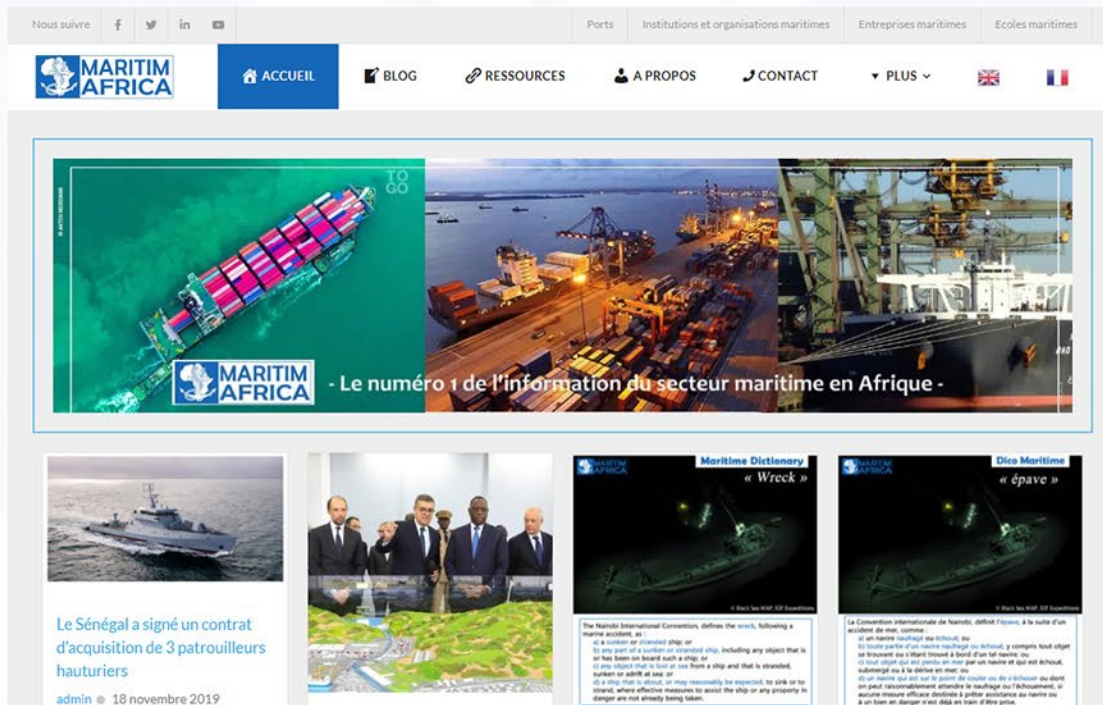
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