

## BLUE ECONOMY IMPLEMENTATION AS A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE COASTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aims to review the role of the Blue Economy in supporting sustainable coastal and marine development by integrating economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social welfare.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted using peer-reviewed articles and international reports published between 2015 and 2025. Relevant literature was collected from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar and analyzed using thematic synthesis.

**Findings:** The results indicate that the Blue Economy is driven by sustainable fisheries, marine tourism, renewable ocean energy, marine conservation, and efficient resource utilization. Government support, technological innovation, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable financing are identified as key factors influencing successful implementation. Furthermore, Blue Economy practices contribute to economic growth, employment creation, environmental protection, and the welfare of coastal communities.

**Research Limitations/Implications:** This review is limited to selected databases and English-language publications. Future research should focus on empirical studies examining Blue Economy implementation in developing countries.

**Practical Implications:** The findings provide insights for policymakers and practitioners in developing sustainable marine resource management strategies.

**Originality/Value:** This study offers a comprehensive overview of Blue Economy research and identifies opportunities for future sustainable development initiatives.

**Paper Type:** Literature Review

**Keywords:** Blue Economy; Sustainable Development; Marine Resources; Coastal Development; Environmental Sustainability.

### A .INTRODUCTION

The increasing challenges of climate change, marine pollution, overfishing, and coastal ecosystem degradation have raised global concerns regarding the sustainability of marine resources. Oceans cover more than 70% of the Earth's surface and play a vital role in supporting economic activities, food security, biodiversity conservation, and climate regulation (United Nations, 2024). As a result, the concept of the Blue Economy has gained significant attention as an innovative approach to balancing economic development with environmental sustainability.

The Blue Economy refers to the sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources to promote economic growth, improve livelihoods, and create employment opportunities while preserving the health of marine ecosystems (World Bank, 2023). Unlike conventional economic models that often

prioritize resource exploitation, the Blue Economy emphasizes resource efficiency, ecosystem conservation, renewable marine energy, sustainable fisheries, and environmentally responsible business practices (Pauli, 2010). This approach aligns closely with the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 14, which focuses on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources (United Nations, 2024). Indonesia, as the world's largest archipelagic country, possesses significant marine and coastal resources that contribute substantially to national economic development. The fisheries, aquaculture, marine tourism, maritime transportation, and coastal industries provide employment and income for millions of people (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2024). However, increasing environmental pressures, including marine debris, habitat destruction, illegal fishing, and climate-related impacts, threaten the long-term sustainability of these sectors (UNEP, 2024). Consequently, the adoption of Blue Economy principles has become a strategic priority for achieving sustainable marine and coastal development. Previous studies have highlighted the positive contributions of Blue Economy initiatives to economic growth, employment generation, environmental protection, and community welfare (Lee et al., 2022; OECD, 2024). Sustainable fisheries management, marine ecotourism, renewable ocean energy, and coastal ecosystem restoration have been identified as key drivers of sustainable economic transformation. Nevertheless, the successful implementation of Blue Economy strategies remains constrained by various factors, including limited financial resources, technological challenges, weak governance structures, and low stakeholder awareness (Smith & Bennett, 2023). Although the number of studies on Blue Economy has increased considerably in recent years, the existing literature remains fragmented across different disciplines and sectors. There is still a need for a comprehensive synthesis of current knowledge regarding the key concepts, determinants, implementation strategies, and impacts of the Blue Economy on sustainable development. Understanding these aspects is essential for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners seeking to design effective policies and programs that maximize economic benefits while ensuring environmental sustainability. Therefore, this study aims to systematically review the existing literature on the Blue Economy from a sustainable development perspective. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the main characteristics of the Blue Economy, examine the factors influencing its implementation, and evaluate its economic, social, and environmental impacts. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on sustainable marine development and provide practical recommendations for future policy and research directions.

### **Blue Economy Concept**

The concept of the Blue Economy was introduced as a sustainable development model that seeks to balance economic growth with environmental conservation and social welfare. According to Pauli (2010), the Blue Economy emphasizes the efficient utilization of marine resources through innovation, resource optimization, and waste minimization. Unlike conventional economic approaches that often prioritize short-term economic gains, the Blue Economy promotes long-term sustainability by ensuring that marine and coastal ecosystems remain productive and resilient. The World Bank (2023) defines the Blue Economy as the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and job creation while preserving the health of marine ecosystems. This concept encompasses various sectors, including fisheries, aquaculture, marine tourism, maritime transportation, renewable ocean energy, marine biotechnology, and coastal ecosystem conservation. As global environmental challenges intensify, the Blue Economy has become an increasingly important framework for achieving sustainable marine and coastal development. Furthermore, the Blue Economy supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water), which aims to conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development (United Nations, 2024).

### **Sustainable Development Theory**

The theoretical foundation of the Blue Economy is closely associated with Sustainable Development Theory. The concept of sustainable development was popularized through the Brundtland Report, which defines sustainable development as development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission

on Environment and Development, 1987). Sustainable development is generally based on three interconnected pillars: economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability. Economic sustainability focuses on generating long-term economic benefits and employment opportunities. Social sustainability emphasizes equitable distribution of resources, poverty reduction, and community welfare. Environmental sustainability seeks to protect natural resources and ecosystems from excessive exploitation (Mensah, 2019). Within the context of the Blue Economy, these three pillars are integrated into a framework that encourages economic activities while maintaining marine biodiversity and ecosystem services. Consequently, Blue Economy initiatives are expected to generate economic value while simultaneously preserving environmental integrity and improving social welfare.

### **Triple Bottom Line Theory**

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory developed by Elkington (1997) provides another important theoretical perspective for understanding the Blue Economy. The theory suggests that organizational and economic success should not be measured solely by financial performance but also by social and environmental outcomes.

#### **The three dimensions of the Triple Bottom Line include:**

1. Profit, referring to economic performance and financial viability.
2. People, referring to social welfare, community development, and equity.
3. Planet, referring to environmental protection and sustainability.

The Blue Economy reflects these three dimensions by promoting profitable economic activities that benefit coastal communities while protecting marine ecosystems. Sustainable fisheries management, ecotourism, and renewable marine energy projects exemplify the application of the Triple Bottom Line approach within marine and coastal sectors.

### **Marine Resource Management**

Effective marine resource management is a critical component of Blue Economy implementation. Marine resources provide essential ecosystem services, including food provision, climate regulation, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood opportunities for coastal populations (FAO, 2024).

However, unsustainable exploitation of marine resources has resulted in declining fish stocks, habitat degradation, and biodiversity loss. According to UNEP (2024), overfishing, marine pollution, and climate change are among the major threats to ocean sustainability. Therefore, sustainable resource management practices such as ecosystem-based fisheries management, marine protected areas, habitat restoration, and integrated coastal zone management have become increasingly important. Several studies indicate that sustainable marine resource management contributes not only to environmental protection but also to long-term economic productivity and resilience of coastal communities (OECD, 2024). Consequently, marine governance and resource management are regarded as fundamental pillars of the Blue Economy framework.

### **Blue Economy and Coastal Community Welfare**

One of the primary objectives of the Blue Economy is to improve the welfare of coastal communities. Coastal populations often rely heavily on fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, and other marine-based activities for their livelihoods. Therefore, sustainable management of marine resources directly affects income generation, employment opportunities, and poverty reduction. Research by Lee et al. (2022) suggests that Blue Economy initiatives can create inclusive economic opportunities through sustainable fisheries, ecotourism development, and marine entrepreneurship. In addition, investments in renewable ocean energy and marine biotechnology have the potential to generate new employment opportunities while reducing environmental pressures. Nevertheless, achieving equitable benefits remains a challenge. Smith and Bennett (2023) argue that inadequate governance, limited access to finance, and unequal resource distribution may prevent local communities from fully benefiting from Blue Economy initiatives. As a result, stakeholder participation, community empowerment, and inclusive policy frameworks are essential for ensuring that Blue Economy development contributes to sustainable and equitable welfare improvements.

### Conceptual Framework

Based on the reviewed literature, the Blue Economy can be understood as a sustainable development approach that integrates marine resource utilization, environmental conservation, and socioeconomic development. The successful implementation of Blue Economy initiatives is influenced by several factors, including government policies, technological innovation, stakeholder collaboration, sustainable financing, and environmental awareness. These factors contribute to the achievement of sustainable development outcomes, including economic growth, employment creation, environmental protection, marine biodiversity conservation, and improved coastal community welfare. Therefore, the Blue Economy serves as a strategic framework for promoting sustainable marine and coastal development in both developed and developing countries.

## B. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. The SLR approach was selected because it enables a comprehensive and systematic examination of existing literature related to the Blue Economy and sustainable development. Through this method, relevant studies are identified, evaluated, and synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concepts, determinants, implementation strategies, and impacts of the Blue Economy. The review process follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure methodological rigor, transparency, and replicability throughout the study.

### Data Sources

The data used in this study consist of secondary data obtained from peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, international organization reports, and other scholarly publications related to the Blue Economy. The literature was collected from reputable academic databases, including:

1. Scopus
2. Web of Science
3. Google Scholar
4. ScienceDirect
5. SpringerLink

To ensure the relevance and timeliness of the analysis, only publications published between 2015 and 2025 were included in the review.

### Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using a combination of keywords related to the research topic. The primary search terms included:

1. "Blue Economy"
2. "Sustainable Development"
3. "Marine Resources"
4. "Coastal Development"
5. "Marine Sustainability"
6. "Ocean Economy"
7. "Sustainable Fisheries"
8. "Marine Conservation"

Boolean operators such as AND and OR were used to refine the search results and improve the relevance of the selected studies.

1. Examples of search strings include:
2. "Blue Economy" AND "Sustainable Development"
3. "Blue Economy" AND "Coastal Community Welfare"
4. "Marine Resources" AND "Environmental Sustainability"
5. "Ocean Economy" AND "Economic Growth"

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To maintain the quality and relevance of the reviewed literature, predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied.

#### Inclusion Criteria

1. Articles published between 2015 and 2025.
2. Peer-reviewed journal articles and reputable institutional reports.
3. Publications written in English.
4. Studies discussing Blue Economy concepts, implementation, determinants, or impacts.
5. Research focusing on economic, environmental, or social dimensions of sustainable development.

#### Data Collection Process

The data collection process followed several stages based on the PRISMA framework:

1. Identification: Initial articles were identified through database searches using selected keywords.
2. Screening: Duplicate records were removed. Titles and abstracts were reviewed to assess relevance.
3. Eligibility: Full-text articles were examined based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.
4. Inclusion: Selected studies were included for detailed analysis and synthesis.

This process ensured that only high-quality and relevant studies were included in the final review.

#### Data Analysis Technique

The selected literature was analyzed using thematic analysis. This method allows the identification of recurring themes, patterns, and relationships across different studies.

The analysis focused on four main themes:

1. Blue Economy concepts and characteristics.
2. Factors influencing Blue Economy implementation.
3. Economic, social, and environmental impacts.
4. Challenges and future opportunities for sustainable marine development.

The findings from each study were categorized and compared to identify similarities, differences, and emerging research trends. The synthesized results were then interpreted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of the Blue Economy in achieving sustainable development.

#### Research Framework

Based on the literature reviewed, this study proposes a conceptual framework in which the successful implementation of the Blue Economy is influenced by several determinants, including government policies, technological innovation, stakeholder collaboration, environmental awareness, and sustainable financing. These factors contribute to sustainable development outcomes such as economic growth, employment creation, environmental conservation, marine biodiversity protection, and improved coastal community welfare. The framework serves as a basis for understanding the relationships between Blue Economy initiatives and sustainable development objectives.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The literature review reveals that the Blue Economy is characterized by the sustainable utilization of marine and coastal resources to achieve economic growth while maintaining environmental sustainability and social well-being. Unlike conventional economic approaches that primarily focus on resource extraction, the Blue Economy promotes resource efficiency, ecosystem conservation, innovation, and inclusive development (World Bank, 2023). Several key sectors consistently identified in the literature include sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, marine tourism, renewable ocean energy, maritime transportation, marine biotechnology, and coastal ecosystem restoration. These sectors contribute significantly to economic development while supporting marine conservation objectives (OECD, 2024). Furthermore, Blue Economy initiatives emphasize the circular economy principle by reducing waste generation, promoting resource efficiency, and encouraging environmentally friendly production and consumption patterns. This approach contributes to both economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

Table 1. Main Characteristics of the Blue Economy

Characteristics	Description
Sustainable Resource Utilization	Efficient use of marine and coastal resources
Environmental Conservation	Protection of marine ecosystems and biodiversity
Economic Growth	Development of ocean-based industries and employment
Social Inclusion	Community participation and welfare improvement
Innovation and Technology	Adoption of sustainable technologies and practices

The findings indicate that the Blue Economy is increasingly viewed as a comprehensive framework capable of balancing economic development and environmental stewardship.

### **Determinants of Blue Economy Implementation**

The review identifies several factors influencing the successful implementation of Blue Economy initiatives.

#### **Government Policies and Regulations**

Government commitment plays a crucial role in facilitating sustainable marine development. Policies related to fisheries management, marine conservation, renewable energy development, and coastal planning significantly affect the effectiveness of Blue Economy programs (UNEP, 2024). Strong regulatory frameworks encourage sustainable resource utilization while preventing environmental degradation caused by overexploitation and pollution.

#### **Technological Innovation**

Technological advancement is another important determinant. Innovations in aquaculture systems, renewable ocean energy, marine monitoring technologies, and sustainable fishing practices improve productivity while minimizing environmental impacts (Lee et al., 2022). Digital technologies such as satellite monitoring, artificial intelligence, and geographic information systems (GIS) are increasingly being utilized to support sustainable marine resource management.

#### **Stakeholder Collaboration**

Successful implementation requires collaboration among governments, private sectors, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. Stakeholder engagement improves policy effectiveness, facilitates knowledge sharing, and enhances community participation in sustainable development initiatives.

#### **Financial Support**

Access to sustainable financing mechanisms is essential for supporting Blue Economy projects. Investments in marine infrastructure, renewable energy, conservation programs, and technological innovation require substantial financial resources. The literature highlights green financing and blue bonds as emerging instruments that support sustainable ocean development.

### **Economic, Social, and Environmental Impacts of the Blue Economy**

#### **Economic Impacts**

The reviewed studies consistently report positive economic outcomes associated with Blue Economy implementation. Sustainable fisheries, marine tourism, and ocean-based industries contribute to increased economic productivity and employment opportunities. Marine tourism, for example, generates significant revenue for coastal communities while encouraging the preservation of natural resources. Similarly, sustainable aquaculture practices enhance food security and export potential.

#### **Social Impacts**

The Blue Economy contributes to improving community welfare by creating employment opportunities, increasing household income, and supporting poverty reduction efforts in coastal

regions. Community-based fisheries management and ecotourism initiatives empower local populations by promoting active participation in resource management and economic activities. This participatory approach strengthens social inclusion and community resilience.

### Environmental Impacts

Environmental sustainability represents one of the most significant benefits of the Blue Economy. Sustainable fisheries management, marine protected areas, mangrove restoration, and pollution control programs contribute to preserving biodiversity and ecosystem services. Several studies indicate that Blue Economy practices reduce pressure on marine ecosystems while enhancing climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. Healthy marine ecosystems also provide long-term economic benefits by maintaining fisheries productivity and supporting tourism activities.

Table 2. Impacts of Blue Economy Implementation

Dimension	Positive Impacts
Economic	Economic growth, job creation, increased investment
Social	Poverty reduction, community empowerment, social inclusion
Environmental	Biodiversity conservation, pollution reduction, climate resilience

These findings demonstrate that the Blue Economy contributes to achieving the three pillars of sustainable development: economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental protection.

### Challenges and Future Opportunities

Despite its significant potential, the implementation of the Blue Economy faces several challenges.

#### Governance Challenges

Weak institutional capacity and fragmented policy frameworks often hinder effective implementation. Coordination among governmental agencies remains a major concern in many developing countries.

#### Financial Challenges

Limited access to investment and sustainable financing mechanisms restricts the development of Blue Economy projects, particularly in small-scale coastal communities.

**Technological Challenges** Many developing countries continue to experience technological limitations that affect productivity and environmental monitoring capabilities.

#### Environmental Challenges

Climate change, ocean acidification, marine pollution, and biodiversity loss continue to threaten the sustainability of marine resources. Addressing these challenges requires long-term commitment and integrated management approaches.

#### Future Opportunities

Despite these challenges, the future prospects of the Blue Economy remain highly promising. Increasing global attention toward sustainability, advancements in marine technology, and growing investment in renewable energy provide opportunities for accelerating Blue Economy development. Furthermore, international cooperation, sustainable financing instruments, and stronger environmental policies can enhance the effectiveness of Blue Economy initiatives. As countries continue to pursue sustainable development goals, the Blue Economy is expected to play an increasingly important role in supporting economic growth while preserving marine ecosystems for future generations. Overall, the findings suggest that the Blue Economy represents a viable and sustainable pathway for achieving balanced economic, social, and environmental development in coastal and marine regions.

## D. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to review the existing literature on the Blue Economy from a sustainable development perspective. Based on the systematic literature review, the findings

indicate that the Blue Economy serves as a strategic framework for balancing economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social welfare through the sustainable utilization of marine and coastal resources. The review identified several key characteristics of the Blue Economy, including sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, marine tourism, renewable ocean energy, marine conservation, and efficient resource utilization. The successful implementation of Blue Economy initiatives is influenced by various factors, such as government policies, technological innovation, stakeholder collaboration, environmental awareness, and sustainable financing mechanisms.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that Blue Economy practices generate positive economic, social, and environmental impacts. Economically, they contribute to job creation, income generation, and investment growth. Socially, they support community empowerment, poverty reduction, and improved livelihoods in coastal areas. Environmentally, they promote biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, pollution reduction, and climate resilience.

Despite these benefits, several challenges remain, including weak governance structures, limited financial resources, technological constraints, and environmental pressures such as climate change and marine pollution. Therefore, addressing these challenges is essential to maximize the long-term benefits of Blue Economy implementation.

Overall, the Blue Economy represents a sustainable pathway for achieving marine and coastal development while ensuring the preservation of natural resources for future generations.

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