



Background:

Kenya, Canada and Japan co-hosted the first global conference on the sustainable blue economy. The event is the preparatory meeting to the UN Ocean's Conference, which Kenya will be co-hosting with Portugal in 2020. Over 4,000 participants from around the world attended the Nairobi event, and the Conference focused on:

- harnessing the potential of oceans, seas, lakes and rivers to improve the lives of all, particularly people in developing states, women, youth, and Indigenous peoples
- leveraging on the latest innovations, scientific advances, and best practices to build prosperity while conserving waters for future generations
- capturing concrete commitments and practical actions to help the world transition to the blue economy

The Blue Economy

Modeled on the principles of the green economy, the blue economy is an emerging framework for sustainable development of aquatic-based industries including fisheries (capture and culture), fish processing, transport, tourism, energy and more.

Blue economy approaches seek to maximize the socioeconomic benefits of aquatic industries while minimizing environmental degradation, by taking a more holistic and integrated approach to managing these sectors that often share overlapping and or conflicting interests.



FAO's Engagement

FAO contributed to the Conference following the Director General's recommendation and in light of the experience and expertise that FAO lent, specifically with regard to ending hunger, in the context of blue economy development. The event also offered an opportunity to:

- further shape the direction of blue economy development and thinking by way of recommendations, and
- mobilize resources to further develop and scale up FAO Blue Growth Initiative activities.

FAO's side events:

1. **Plenary Event on Ending Hunger, Securing Food Supplies and Promoting Good Health and Sustainable Fisheries**—tackled the issue of food security and nutrition in the context of the blue economy. Fisheries, aquaculture and associated value chains are essential contributors within the blue economy to enhancing food security and nutrition. [Photos here](#).
2. **Aquaculture Side Event**—identified and leveraged fisheries and aquaculture-related linkages to promote dietary diversification and improve health and nutrition outcomes in Kenya. Photos here. [Photos here](#).
3. **Blue Fashion Side Event**—raised awareness and provided a platform for dialogue regarding new opportunities for decent work and the use of biomaterials in sustainable fashion, its barriers and potential solutions. Featured local and international designers that have tapped into the blue economy by using ocean-sourced material in their garments. [Photos here](#).
4. **Finance Side Event**—displayed and discussed various considerations relevant to mobilizing financial resources, for seeding and sustaining blue economy interventions, specifically in relation to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and with a focus on developing countries. [Photos here](#).

Web story

#BlueFashion: From Lake Turkana to the runway

Promoting a sustainable blue economy to support livelihoods in Kenya

Tucked away in Kenya's northernmost region along the border with Ethiopia sits Lake Turkana, the world's largest desert lake. Poverty is widespread in this area. Infrastructure is almost non-existent; only sandy, unpaved roads breach these limits, but even for trucks, it is a challenging feat. [Read more...](#)



Blue Growth blog

Fish skin leather on the catwalks of Nairobi. Could Milan and New York be next?

Necks crane as the lithe Kenyan models display their stylish dresses, purses and shoes at the Blue Fashion show taking place at Kenya's Blue Economy Conference.

While unveiling new fashion designs always elicits curious attention from fashion show attendees, when that couture is designed from fish skin leather, fish scales and seaweed fabric, audience engagement reaches new levels. [Read more...](#)



News Coverage



1. [Business Daily news article](#) on Blue Fashion Side Event (also 1 page spread in print version)
2. [Al Jazeera English segment](#) on Blue Fashion Event
3. France 24 Arabic
4. [Gidi Central](#) – Marine materials make waves in the fashion industry
5. [ABC Espana](#) – La moda azul: del lago Turkana a la pasarela
6. [Inter Press Service News Agency](#) – Blue Fashion Steals the Show
7. [The Commonwealth](#) - Kenyan designers bring sea change to global fashion industry
8. [All Africa](#) – Blue Fashion Steals the Show at Nairobi Conference
9. [Global Issues](#)
10. [IISD Reporting Services](#) – Summary Highlights of the Conference
11. [Africanews](#) - Sustainable Blue Economy Conference Nairobi, Kenya