

Toward the Promotion of Sustainable Development in Africa:

Strengthening the Japan-Africa Partnership and Enhancing the Effectiveness of the TICAD Process

Recommendations of the High-Level Expert Group on TICAD



Edited by The Sasakawa Peace Foundation
Supported by The Nippon Foundation and Sasakawa Africa Association

July 11, 2025

Africa is currently at a critical turning point in the international economic and geopolitical landscape. Sectors such as renewable energy, digital innovation, and critical minerals are driving growth, while at the same time facing challenges such as high debt burdens, inflation, and instability in international financial markets. On the socioeconomic front, rapid population growth and urbanization are creating new opportunities in areas such as infrastructure, education, and employment, while at the same time creating social burdens.

Africa's population is expected to reach approximately 1.7 billion by 2030 and over 2.5 billion by 2050, representing a quarter of the world's population. While this population growth can be a driver of economic growth, it also risks creating social conflicts and imbalances, particularly in food security and job creation.

Since the 1980s, The Nippon Foundation has been engaged in agricultural support in Africa. In 1984, when a devastating famine struck Ethiopia—causing the deaths of millions—former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug, and then-Chairman of The Nippon Foundation, Ryoichi Sasakawa, joined forces to initiate agricultural assistance for Africa. In parallel, the Sasakawa Africa Association was established in 1986 to focus on training agricultural leaders and supporting smallholder farmers in diversifying their livelihoods.

The global situation surrounding food security is becoming increasingly severe. In addition to climate change and geopolitical risks, Africa is experiencing rapid population growth. It is projected that by 2050, the continent's population will double to approximately 2.5 billion people. In this context, not only agriculture but also the importance of fisheries and aquaculture as sustainable food sources is growing ever more significant.

At the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, we have been conducting research and policy dialogues on issues related to the blue economy, including the fisheries industry, marine economy, and maritime livelihoods. Fisheries resources not only contribute to improved regional food supply but also stimulate economic revitalization and job creation in fishing communities. This is especially relevant in coastal regions, where despite fisheries being a primary means of livelihood, development has been hindered by a lack of technology and infrastructure.

Looking ahead, in Africa, it will be essential to strengthen comprehensive implementation frameworks not only for improving agricultural productivity but also in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including human resource development, technological advancement, and resource management.

Africa's coastal and marine areas cover a vast space of more than 30,000 kilometers and are rich in biodiversity, supporting the livelihoods of many people through fisheries and aquaculture. Marine and inland fisheries support the livelihoods of millions of people and are a major source of animal protein, but their sustainability is threatened by overfishing, habitat degradation, and the effects of climate change. Although the aquaculture industry continues to expand, its full potential has not been realized. Looking ahead to future increases in food demand, fisheries have the potential to contribute to improving food supply and nutrition, creating jobs, and reducing dependence on imports. Therefore, strengthening sustainable fisheries management, strategic investment in aquaculture, and improving the cold chain and market access are key to increasing food security throughout Africa.

In 1993, the Japanese government launched the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to promote dialogue with African leaders in order to promote Japanese and international support for African development efforts. Now, 32 years after its inception, the Japanese government plans to host the 9th TICAD (TICAD 9) in Yokohama, Japan, from August 20 to 22, 2025. During this period, Africa has achieved rapid socioeconomic development and institutional reforms. International partnerships

supporting Africa have also expanded and diversified. Given this situation, it is important to reflect on the achievements and challenges of TICAD and to identify ways to further enhance the effectiveness of TICAD in helping Africa achieve sustainable development.

In light of these circumstances, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation (NF) and the Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA), established the High Level Expert Group on TICAD.ⁱ The High-Level Expert Group held its first meeting in August 2024 and held a total of four meetings since then through January 2025, exchanging views with government officials, experts from the private sector and academia. The High-Level Expert Group discussed a wide range of topics, including the contemporary socio-economic, environmental, and geopolitical situation in Africa and future projections, the progress and challenges of Japanese assistance to Africa, as well as the expansion of international partnerships and the future vision of Japan-Africa cooperation towards TICAD and sustainable development. The participants discussed a wide range of topics.

In particular, it was recognized that strengthening cooperation between Japan and Africa in the fisheries sector, including fisheries and aquaculture, is of great significance for both sides in addressing serious food security challenges in Africa. Japan has a high level of expertise and experience in sustainable fisheries resource management, fisheries and aquaculture technology, and value chain development, and can make a significant contribution to human resource development, infrastructure development, and knowledge sharing in Africa.

Through collaboration between Japan and Africa in the field of fisheries, it is expected to modernize small-scale fisheries, promote adaptive fisheries and aquaculture that are resilient to climate change, and maintain and increase added value through improved post-catch processing, handling, and distribution. In addition, joint research and investment in resource monitoring and ecosystem-based management practices will enhance the sustainability and profitability of the fisheries industry. Japan's cooperation to realize a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive Blue Economy and to improve food security is consistent with the development priorities of African countries, and Japan can actively contribute to long-term sustainable development, improved food security, and enhanced livelihoods in Africa.

Based on these discussions, the High-Level Expert Group has compiled its findings into a set of recommendations, which were discussed with the Chairpersons of the African Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo and others.

The recommendations will be discussed at the Japan-Africa Partnership Wise Men's Meeting scheduled to be held in Hakone on July 22-24, 2025. By engaging individuals with backgrounds as African heads of state or executives of regional institutions to discuss ways to effectively implement the recommendations, which will be presented at a special international symposium on July 25 at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation International Conference Hall in Tokyo. The results of the symposium will be presented at a special international symposium to be held on July 25 at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation International Conference Hall in Tokyo. The results of the symposium discussions will be shared with the participating heads of state and government at a side event to be held in conjunction with the 9th TICAD in Yokohama in August 2025, with the aim of strengthening cooperation with African countries.

We hope that this proposal will serve as an opportunity to further deepen the partnership between Japan and Africa and to further invigorate and improve the effectiveness of the TICAD process in the future.

Atsushi Sunami
President,
The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Yohei Sasakawa
Honorary Chair
The Nippon Foundation

Toward the Promotion of Sustainable Development in Africa:

Strengthening the Japan-Africa Partnership and Enhancing the Effectiveness of the TICAD Process

Summary of Recommendations

Comprehensive Policy Approach

1 Unlock Africa's Potential and Create Sustainable Growth Together

By identifying priority issues in African countries and making maximum use of Japan's technological capabilities, experience, and human resources, promote a sustainable Blue Economy and strengthen food security, including improving agricultural production and food distribution. Pioneer new co-creation between Africa and Japan by realizing Africa's potential in terms of resources and human resources.

2 Encourage the creation of inclusive and responsive societies

It is essential to promote sustainability and inclusiveness to tackle complex challenges such as climate change, economic disparity, and social vulnerability, and to encourage the improvement of livelihoods and social participation of all people who are resilient and capable. Japan will utilize its knowledge in environmental, economic, and social aspects, and collaborate with African countries and regional organizations to promote the creation of a sustainable and resilient society in which no one is left behind.

Strengthening the Implementation System and Institutional Framework

3 Strengthen the system to promote Japan-Africa exchanges through the cooperation of the public and private sectors

Based on the framework for intergovernmental cooperation of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), private companies, organizations, universities, research institutions, local governments, NGOs, and other diverse entities will work together to expand cooperative relations with Africa. Strengthen the "all-Japan" framework for engaging with Africa by expanding opportunities for exchange and mechanisms for strengthening cooperation toward the realization of sustainable development in Japan and Africa.

4 Institutionalize a forum for multilayered policy dialogue and deepen collaboration

While making use of the accumulated dialogue between Japanese and African leaders, institutionalize a framework for policy and dialogue and strengthen stakeholder collaboration for the promotion of sustainable development, involving experienced heads of state, researchers, NGOs, businesses, and international and regional organizations. In this way, we aim to formulate and implement policies through more multilateral and inclusive dialogue, and promote solutions to issues and initiatives to promote peace, sustainable societies, and prosperity in Africa in a manner that incorporates the voices and perspectives of the African people.

5 Develop an investment system to encourage entrepreneurs and start-ups (New business creation)

Support the development of New Projects and innovative initiatives by young people and entrepreneurs through the establishment and expansion of impact investment funds, etc. Collaborate with JICA and the African Development Bank to promote projects and business models that both solve social issues and are profitable, thereby creating employment and income.

6**Develop a capacity building program to accelerate practical human resource development and social implementation**

In order to create concrete results in the areas of sustainable Blue Economy, agriculture, and regional development, it is essential to develop the next generation of viable leaders with cross-disciplinary knowledge and practical skills in the field, and to promote human resource and leadership development and training programs for this purpose. In promoting assistance to Africa, in addition to bilateral cooperation between Japan and Africa and cooperation through African regional organizations, we will also consider the use of a triangular cooperation framework involving Asian countries and other international organizations.

7**Visualize achievements and results and disseminate information strategically to expand the circle of co-creation**

Accumulate and share information on numerical results and case studies of Africa support and cooperation. Visualize successes and impacts in figures and stories to promote dialogue and collaboration with policy makers and civil society. Through Continuing Project monitoring and evaluation of results, increase the effectiveness of collaboration and strategically disseminate information to encourage greater stakeholder participation.



Toward the promotion of sustainable development in Africa:

Strengthening the Japan-Africa Partnership and Improving the Effectiveness of the TICAD Process

Recommendations

Integrated Policy Approach

1 Unlock Africa's Potential and Create Sustainable Growth Together

- Africa's rich diversity and resources hold immense potential. We seek to realize this potential through innovation, institutional strengthening, capacity building, effective financing, environmental protection, and long-term sustainability, so that this potential can be optimally harnessed.
- To respond to rapid population growth, industrialization, socioeconomic risks, and changing resource demands, we will use statistics and data science to promote realistic policy formulation and implementation, and strengthen regional cooperation and international partnerships.
- While identifying Africa's priority issues, Japan will integrate its technological capabilities, experience, expertise, and human resources to solve problems and promote initiatives, and provide effective support and partnerships in areas such as promoting a sustainable Blue Economy, improving agricultural production, optimizing food distribution, improving food security, water resource management, and fostering young, practical leaders, and partnerships will be developed.
- To eradicate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, sustainable fisheries management and maritime security environment will be improved through thorough implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), enhanced maritime surveillance, and utilization of satellite data.
- Promote sustainable management of coastal, marine, and inland ecosystems to enhance food security, conserve biodiversity, and improve adaptability to climate change.

2 Encourage the creation of an inclusive and responsive society

- Advance sustainable development in Africa by promoting measures to enhance sustainability and inclusiveness in diverse areas, including resource conservation and sustainable management, infrastructure development, ecosystem conservation, and strengthening linkages among information systems.
- In regions including islands and coastal areas, which have multiple vulnerabilities including socioeconomic aspects such as environment and disparities due to various factors such as climate change and geographical remoteness, the project will collaborate with external partners and take strategic measures to solve such complex issues, and promote livelihood improvement and social participation of local communities. Promote the resilience of local communities and the development of societies where no one is left behind through the reduction of vulnerability and improvement of sustainability.
- Advance innovative approaches to food production in terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems to meet growing demand and contribute to Supplementary Rules for biodiversity conservation.

Strengthen the implementation system and institutional framework

3

Strengthen the system to promote Japan-Africa exchanges through public-private partnerships

- Based on the framework for intergovernmental cooperation of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), private companies, organizations, universities, research institutions, local governments, NGOs, and other diverse actors will work together to expand cooperative relations with Africa.
- Strengthen the “all-Japan” framework for engagement with Africa by expanding opportunities for exchange and mechanisms for strengthening cooperation toward the realization of sustainable development in Japan and Africa.
- Institutionalize an economic forum for cooperation between the public and private sectors in Africa and Japan, establish a framework for government, business, and civil society to participate in joint projects, and promote matching and collaborative activities.
- Develop and implement a communication strategy that takes into account cultural and economic characteristics, and strengthen the dissemination of information on partnership activities to promote public understanding and foster mutual trust.
- To promote innovative approaches and capacity building in fisheries resource management, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, and sustainable agriculture by leveraging Japan’s expertise to help improve the Blue Economy, agriculture, and food security in Africa.

4

Institutionalize a multilayered policy dialogue forum and deepen collaboration

- While leveraging the accumulated dialogue between African and Japanese leaders, institutionalize a framework for policy dialogue and strengthened stakeholder collaboration for the promotion of sustainable development with the participation of experienced heads of state, researchers, NGOs, businesses, international and regional organizations, and others.
- Hold regular meetings of African eminent persons with the participation of heads of state, senior officials of regional organizations, and others to promote more multilateral and inclusive dialogue. While sharing the results of such dialogues and outcomes, seek innovative and progressive policies while assessing their effectiveness, and apply them to solving current challenges and to medium- and long-term policy formation and implementation.
- In promoting policy dialogue, we aim to formulate and implement policies through multilateral and inclusive dialogue, and promote solutions to issues and initiatives to promote peace, sustainable societies, and prosperity in Africa by incorporating the voices and perspectives of the African people.
- Actively promote effective partnerships through the use of various frameworks, including bilateral, sub-regional and Africa-wide frameworks, including South-South cooperation and trilateral cooperation frameworks.
- In parallel with institutionalizing dialogue mechanisms involving government, the private sector, academia, and civil society, jointly design Japan-Africa partnership projects and promote their implementation.

5**Develop an investment system to encourage entrepreneurs and start-ups (building New Projects)**

- In collaboration with the African Development Bank and other related institutions, establish and expand impact investment funds that contribute to long-term socioeconomic and environmental outcomes, and build a public-private partnership (blended finance) mechanism to support sustainable development.
- Positioning the development of new projects, innovative initiatives, and projects that contribute to solving social issues by youth and entrepreneurs as one of the key objectives, promote investment and start-up (new project construction) support through the Impact Investment Fund.
- Promote cooperation with JICA, the African Development Bank, and other organizations, and based on the experience of existing projects and precedents, promote the spread of projects and business models that both solve social issues and are profitable, leading to the creation of employment and income.
- Share Japan's knowledge, experience, and strengths in the promotion of entrepreneurship and start-ups (building new projects) that solve social issues.

6**Develop a capacity building program to accelerate practical human resource development and social implementation**

- To create concrete results in the fields of sustainable Blue Economy, agriculture, and regional development, develop the next generation of practical leaders with cross-sectoral knowledge and on-the-ground practical skills.
- In order to develop practical leaders with the ability to execute, we will collaborate with various organizations and experts from universities, research institutes, government, and the private sector to formulate and implement human resource and leadership development and training programs that are interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral, and incorporate practical examples.
- In implementing the human resource/leadership development program, the important objectives of the program include the empowerment of youth and women and the development of practitioners in local community organizations, etc., in order to nurture entrepreneurs and practitioners with the ability to implement, who will lead a sustainable Blue Economy in Africa.

7**Visualize and strategically communicate achievements and results to expand the circle of co-creation**

- Accumulate and share information on figures and case studies of Africa's support and collaboration achievements.
- Introduce and enhance a Continuing Project monitoring and evaluation system that utilizes indicator setting and benchmarking to monitor progress and results, improve information sharing and transparency regarding the effectiveness of support, and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of collaborative projects.
- To "visualize" success stories and impacts in numerical values and stories, to promote dialogue and collaboration with policy makers and civil society, and to strategically disseminate information to encourage participation.

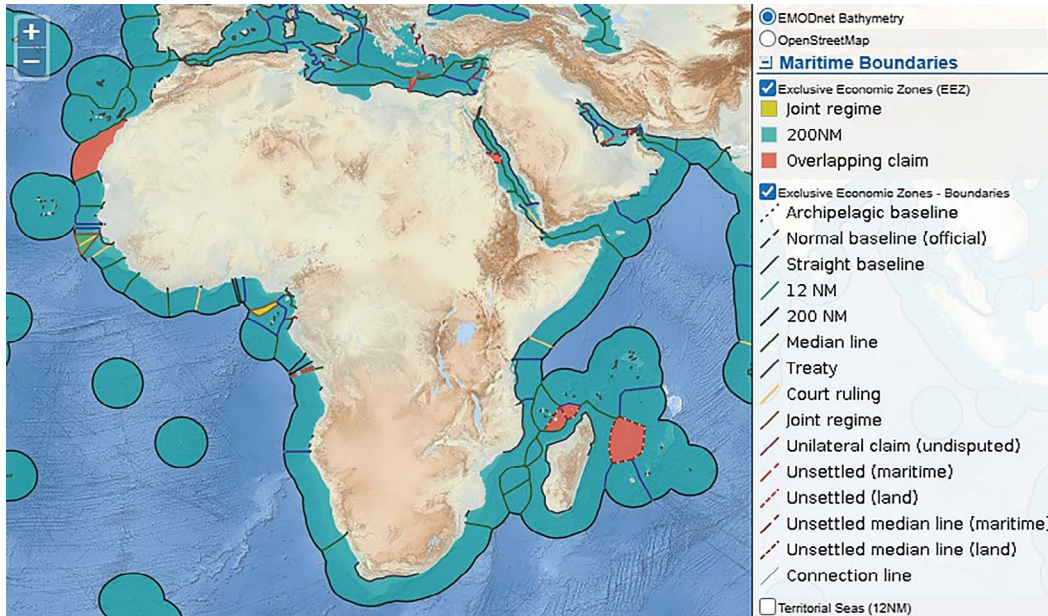
Background and Rationale

Policy Background

Ocean and ocean-based economic activities play a critical role in sustainable development and poverty reduction. Blue Economy includes fisheries and aquaculture, shipping, tourism, renewable energy, mineral and fossil fuel extraction, blue carbon (e.g., mangroves, seagrass beds, tidal flats), and marine biodiversity conservation. Harmonizing economic growth, social inclusion, and livelihoods with the environmental sustainability of marine and coastal areas is the core challenge of the Blue Economy. Governments, international organizations, research institutions, and NGOs are actively promoting the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources to achieve these Supplementary Rules.

Blue Economy is an important policy area in Africa, but there are many challenges, although progress is being made in strengthening policies and implementation systems. Africa’s coastal and maritime regions have a vast maritime space consisting of territorial waters and exclusive economic zones (EEZs) with coastlines totaling more than 30,000 km in length, and thus have high potential for the Blue Economy (Figure 1).¹ In addition to sea surface, coastal, and brackish water areas, inland fisheries and aquaculture are also important industries that are emphasized as sources of food supply and income, pointing to the significance of developing a sustainable Blue Economy in a broader sense that includes the liquidation of aquatic biological resources, including inland waters as well as sea surface. In 2018, the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference held in Kenya emphasized the strengthening of efforts in the areas of shipping, tourism, energy, fisheries, climate change, and waste management.² The African Union (AU) adopted the Africa Blue Economy Strategy in 2019, positioning the promotion of the Blue Economy as an important pillar of its measures to promote sustainable development and is moving forward with its implementation.^{3,4} The Blue Economy has created about \$300 billion in economic impact and 49 million jobs in Africa, which is expected to grow to about \$400 billion and 57 million jobs in 2030, and about \$600 billion and 70 million jobs in 2063.

Supplementary Rules are expected to reach approximately \$400 billion and 57 million jobs in 2030, and approximately \$600 billion and 78 million jobs in 2063, respectively.⁵



Marine Region (2025)

Figure 1: African Countries and EEZs

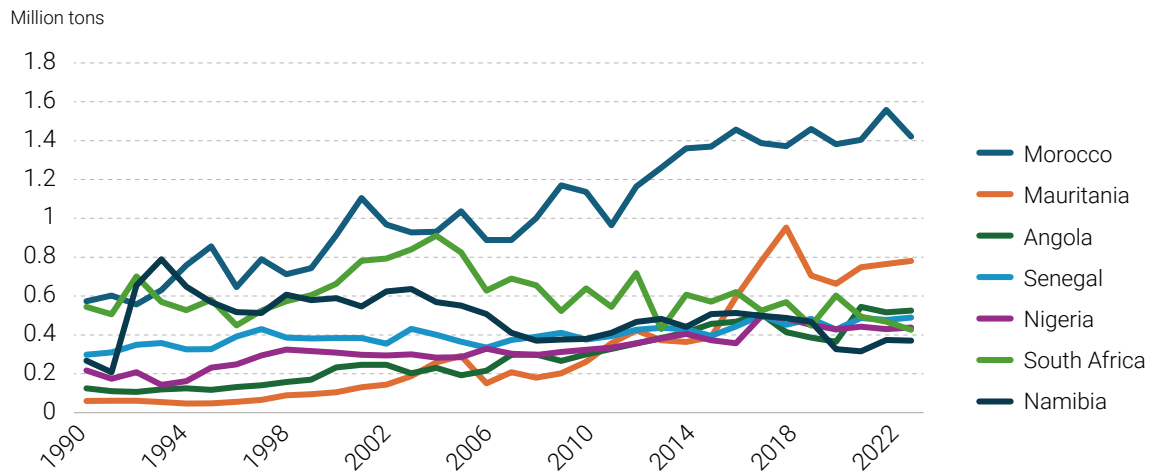
On the other hand, the implementation of Blue Economy policies in various countries varies. Taking Southern Africa as an example, Mozambique shows a growth trend, while South Africa, Angola, and Namibia show stagnant or declining trends. Specifically, catches in South Africa and Namibia have remained flat, while those in Angola and Mozambique have increased. Namibia is the leading exporter of fishery products, while South Africa and Mozambique are net importers. South Africa has designated more than 15% of its waters as protected areas, while other countries have been slow to make progress on protection measures. Tourism is booming in South Africa, Namibia, and Mozambique, with the exception of Angola. Energy production remains dependent on fossil fuels, and the development of renewable energy sources is in its early stages. These circumstances suggest that while some progress has been made in the Blue Economy in Southern Africa, further research and human resource development are urgent issues.

Blue finance is growing rapidly in the areas of climate change action and conservation finance, attracting the interest of investors and financial institutions. This will accelerate financing to help protect marine ecosystems, ensure clean water, and promote a sustainable Blue Economy. Blue bonds and other financial instruments are being used in areas such as marine protection, water resources management, marine pollution reduction, sustainable shipping, ecotourism, offshore renewable energy, and aquaculture. Seychelles, Japan, Indonesia, Fiji, the Philippines, Thailand, and the Maldives, supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank International Finance Corporation (IFC), are notable success stories. Seychelles issued a Blue Bond in 2015, and in 2020 it will leverage a World Bank debt guarantee and a low-interest loan from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to promote marine conservation.⁶ The IFC has also been instrumental in promoting blue economy development in Africa.

Blue Economy promotion in Africa is being accelerated through policy coordination and financial cooperation by the African Union (AU), the African Development Bank, and several sub-regional institutions. Currently, 38 coastal and island states out of 54 African countries have adopted Blue Economy, with diverse geographic and socioeconomic conditions. In addition to the Africa-wide regional institutions, five sub-regional institutions promote policy coordination and cooperation.

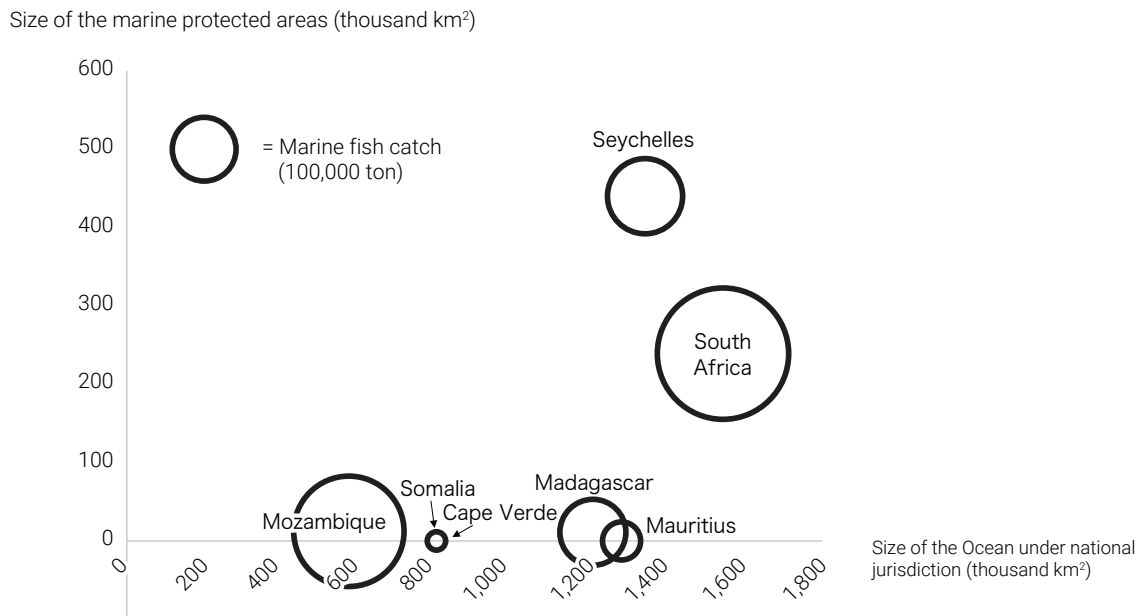
Sustainable Blue Economy and Marine Management in Africa

Africa's population is expected to reach approximately 1.7 billion by 2030 and over 2.5 billion by 2050, representing a quarter of the world's population.^{7,8} Between 2013 and 2023, Africa's population grew by approximately 320 million people, representing a 28.1% growth rate over the past decade.⁹ Sea catches across Africa are on the rise, with several patterns of catch growth, flattening, and declines by country (Figure 2). Population growth has greatly increased the demand for food, mainly protein, and has exacerbated overfishing in coastal areas. This has led to increased calls for the establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs). The status of MPA designation within the exclusive economic zones (EEZ) of African countries varies widely. In the Seychelles, 32.8% of the water area is designated as MPAs, followed by Gabon (28.8%), Sudan (16.1%), and South Africa (15.5%).¹⁰ Mozambique, on the other hand, has only 2.1%, while Mauritius and Cape Verde have very small areas (50 square kilometers and 5 square kilometers, respectively) but almost zero percentages. Furthermore, the limited effectiveness of protection measures in designated MPAs has led governments to raise concerns about their actual status. A comparison of the size of national jurisdictional waters and marine protected areas, as well as the amount of fish caught, shows that South Africa has a large area of marine protected areas while Seychelles has a large area of waters and maintains a reasonable amount of fish caught (Figure 3).



FAO FishStatJ (2025)

Figure 2: Catch and trends for the top seven African countries (1990–2023)



Note: Cabo Verde and Somalia have similar figures and their circles overlap.
 Author developed based on the data from Fishstatand Protected Planet (2025)

Figure 3: National jurisdictions, marine protected areas, and catches of the top seven countries in African waters

Tourism in Africa

The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected marine tourism in South Africa, particularly cruise and coastal tourism and related industries. The ban on cruise ship arrivals and the reduction in port operations resulted in a significant drop in the number of tourists and had a significant impact on the coastal communities that depend on tourism. The closure of non-essential port services following the initial lockdown also hampered the industry's recovery. Recovery remains slow today due to safety concerns, regulatory barriers, and inadequate government support. Even after restrictions were eased, the tourism industry has been unable to recover to pre-pandemic levels, and this is due to declining tourist confidence and international travel.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in Africa

Despite active fishing activity off the west and east coasts of Africa, maritime law enforcement agencies are struggling to keep track of fishing vessels. Satellite data on fishing vessel operations off the coast of southern Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea indicate that fishing vessels operating in the coastal zone, which are thought to be primarily coastal state vessels, plus a large number of vessels, operate in the high seas outside the EEZ boundaries (Figures 4 and 5). Many of the vessels operating in the high seas are registered to pelagic fishing nations. This has raised concerns regarding IUU fishing in the territorial waters and EEZs of African countries. In particular, issues such as improved coordination with regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and relevant regulatory bodies have been identified.

The Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), which entered into force in 2016, aims to eradicate illegal fishing by strictly limiting port access for vessels involved in illegal fishing. Some countries in southern Africa, including South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola, are signatories to the PSMA, but many are not, limiting the regional response. Many countries lack the resources, technology, and political will to monitor fisheries using technologies such as satellite imagery and automatic identification system (AIS).

Global warming has been observed to increase seawater temperatures worldwide, and there are concerns about the effects of such seawater temperature increases on coastal and marine ecosystems, fish habitats, and migration routes (Figure 6). In some ocean areas, there are concerns that fish species may migrate or that the composition of fish species may change. It has also been reported that in some areas the seawater temperature is decreasing due to increased wind power, and it is necessary to understand the

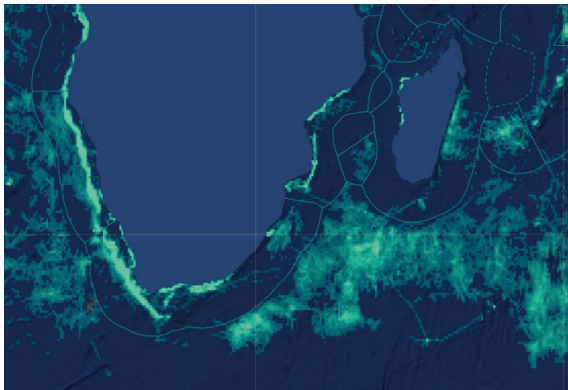


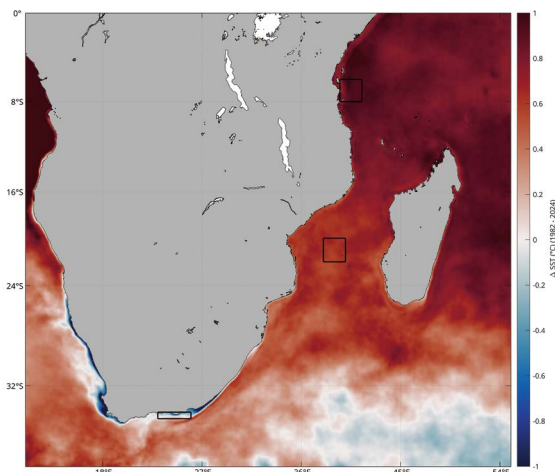
Figure 4: Fishing Fleet Operations in Southern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean (July 2025)

Compiled by author from Global Fishing Watch



Figure 5: Fishing Fleet Operations in the Gulf of Guinea (July 2025)

Prepared by the author from Global Fishing Watch



Robert, M. (2025)

Figure 6: SST anomalies in Southern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean in May 2025
SST anomalies in May 2025
(Compared to 1982–2024 average)

effects of such a decrease in seawater temperature. Decreases in fish catch and reductions in the size of fish caught are also reported to be caused by increases in seawater temperatures and changes.

In the marine environment, as well as anthropogenic influences such as overfishing, seawater pollution, and reduction of biological habitats due to the development of coastal areas. It is necessary to seek and implement countermeasures, climate change adaptation measures, etc., while keeping an eye on these various factors.

Comprehensive and bird’s-eye view policy perspective

In order to promote a sustainable Blue Economy, it is necessary to take a comprehensive approach by combining various policies from a bird’s-eye viewpoint, such as sustainable fishery management, elimination of overfishing and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, prevention of marine environmental degradation, restoration of marine environment, measures against climate change, and conservation of marine biodiversity (Figure 7).

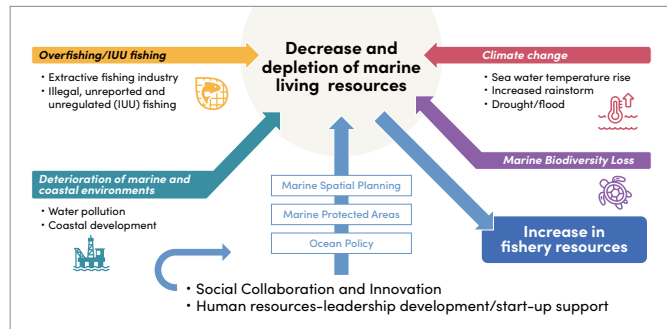


Figure 7: Marine Environmental Changes and Their Impacts

Institutional Framework for Regional and Subregional Cooperation in Africa

Established in 2002, the African Union (AU) is responsible for policy coordination among 55 countries, including the five sub-regions of Central, East, North, South, and West Africa. The African Development Bank works with the AU to support sustainable development through projects on food production, energy, industrial growth, and livelihoods. The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), launched in 2001 and reorganized in 2018 into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) focuses on capacity building and sustainable development.

Role of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and Sub-Regional Organizations

The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and other key institutions support sustainable development through cooperation initiatives in specific areas. At the sub-regional level, organizations such as the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Intergovernmental Development Organization (IGAD), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) promote cooperation within their respective regions, and some countries are members of several sub-regional organizations.

Promotion of Blue Economy in Africa and Cooperation with Japan and the International Community

South Africa boasts a large economy compared to other coastal countries on the African continent and serves as an important transportation hub for the Southern African region. Mozambique and Namibia also play important roles in promoting maritime security, fisheries resource management, and renewable energy in the region. During the visit of then Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, and Mozambique in April and May of 2023, he described Mozambique as “an important port hub for strengthening connectivity in the free and open Indo-Pacific and promoting growth in the country and the surrounding region. Namibia is located on the Atlantic side of South African region and is known for its rich fishing grounds where the cold Benguela Current meets the warm Angola Current.

In 2018, the Norwegian government established the High-Level Panel on Sustainable Blue Economy, which includes Kenya, Ghana, and Namibia. From 2018 to 2023, the Panel worked on issues critical to promoting a sustainable Blue Economy, including fisheries, marine conservation and IUU fishing. The Panel has accumulated knowledge on a wide range of issues, including fisheries, seafood, marine conservation, and the eradication of IUU fishing, and has provided information, policy recommendations, and policy dialogue to promote policy planning, implementation, and international collaboration among leaders and policymakers. In the future, it is expected that such knowledge will be shared with other countries to contribute to the promotion of a sustainable Blue Economy throughout Africa.

Support for policy formulation and implementation based on a social-ecological systems framework

In order to promote a sustainable Blue Economy, it is important to consider ecological and biological aspects such as fishery resources, seagrass and seaweed beds, coral reefs, and mangroves, and earth system aspects such as climate change, as well as socio-economic aspects such as fish catch and income. The policy formulation and implementation should be promoted within a framework that encompasses the socioeconomic aspects, as well as policy aspects such as marine policy, fisheries policy, and action plans (Figure 8).

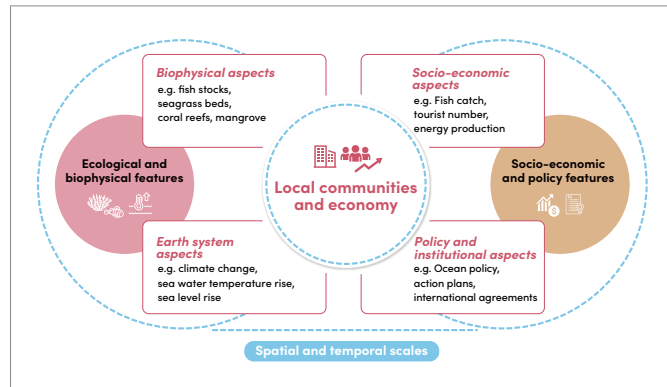


Figure 8: Socio-ecological system framework

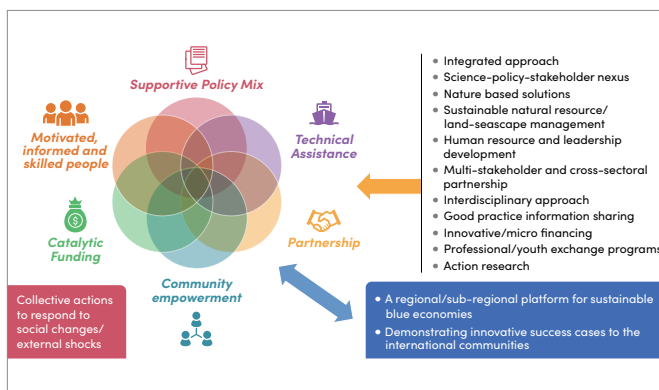


Figure 9: Enabling factors for sustainable and adaptive fisheries

Elements to achieve sustainable and adaptive fisheries

In order to realize sustainable fisheries and fishery industries, various measures need to be implemented in a complex and comprehensive combination, which requires technical assistance, funding, and human resource development (Figure 9). Various initiatives such as cross-sectoral social collaboration, science-based policy promotion, and empirical research can be considered for this purpose.

Diverse Stakeholders / Cross-Sectoral and Multi-Type Collaboration for a Sustainable Blue Economy

In promoting the Blue Economy, emphasis is placed on diverse stakeholder/cross-sectoral partnerships and social collaboration. It is also important to create common benefits and synergistic effects, and to optimize the contradiction between the two. As previously mentioned, such policy elements need to be

effectively planned and implemented in light of factors such as changes in the marine environment, climate change, rising seawater temperatures, and geopolitical events (Figure 10).

Development of Interdisciplinary and Practical Human Resources/Leaders and the Establishment of Policy and Business Models

The effective implementation of such initiatives requires individuals and practical leaders equipped with the knowledge and skills to develop and carry out projects and business models. Students and young people who have specialized in ecology or biology and seek to engage in sustainable blue economy ventures will need to acquire diverse knowledge, including legal and institutional frameworks, financing and resource mobilization, project management, and organizational operations. Likewise, students and young people with a background in social sciences must also gain knowledge in biology, ecology, and earth system science, as these are critical to advancing a sustainable blue economy (Figure 11).

Leadership development programs that enable the short-term acquisition of such practical, interdisciplinary, and cross-sectoral knowledge and skills are increasingly seen as valuable tools for promoting sustainable blue economies, as well as for building the social capacity and fostering international collaboration necessary to support sustainable blue economies.

Future Prospects

The conservation and sustainable use of marine resources is an urgent policy issue in Africa. Regional governments need to adopt a comprehensive approach to combating illegal fishing, especially as resource use is expected to increase with population growth and economic development. In addition to strengthening monitoring of protected areas, it is also important to address social aspects through poverty alleviation, alternative income generation, educational support, and sustainable fishing initiatives. Policy analysis and research should be flexible to changing conditions, and governments need to work to build institutions and strengthen social capacity to promote a sustainable Blue Economy.

In addition to African regional institutions such as the African Union and the African Development Bank, it will be useful to promote a sustainable Blue Economy in Africa through partnerships that leverage the framework of various subregional institutions (Figure 12). In addition to bilateral cooperation, it is expected that Japan and Africa will develop partnerships to promote a sustainable Blue Economy and improve food security by utilizing such regional and sub-regional institutional frameworks.

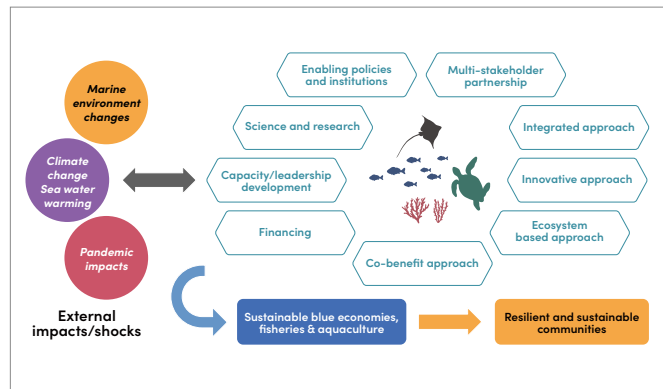


Figure 10: Multi-stakeholder/cross-sectoral partnership for sustainable blue economies

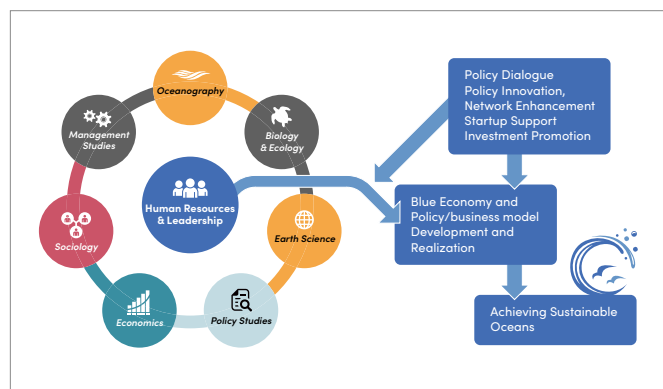


Figure 11: Interdisciplinary and practical human resources/leadership development and policy and business model implementation

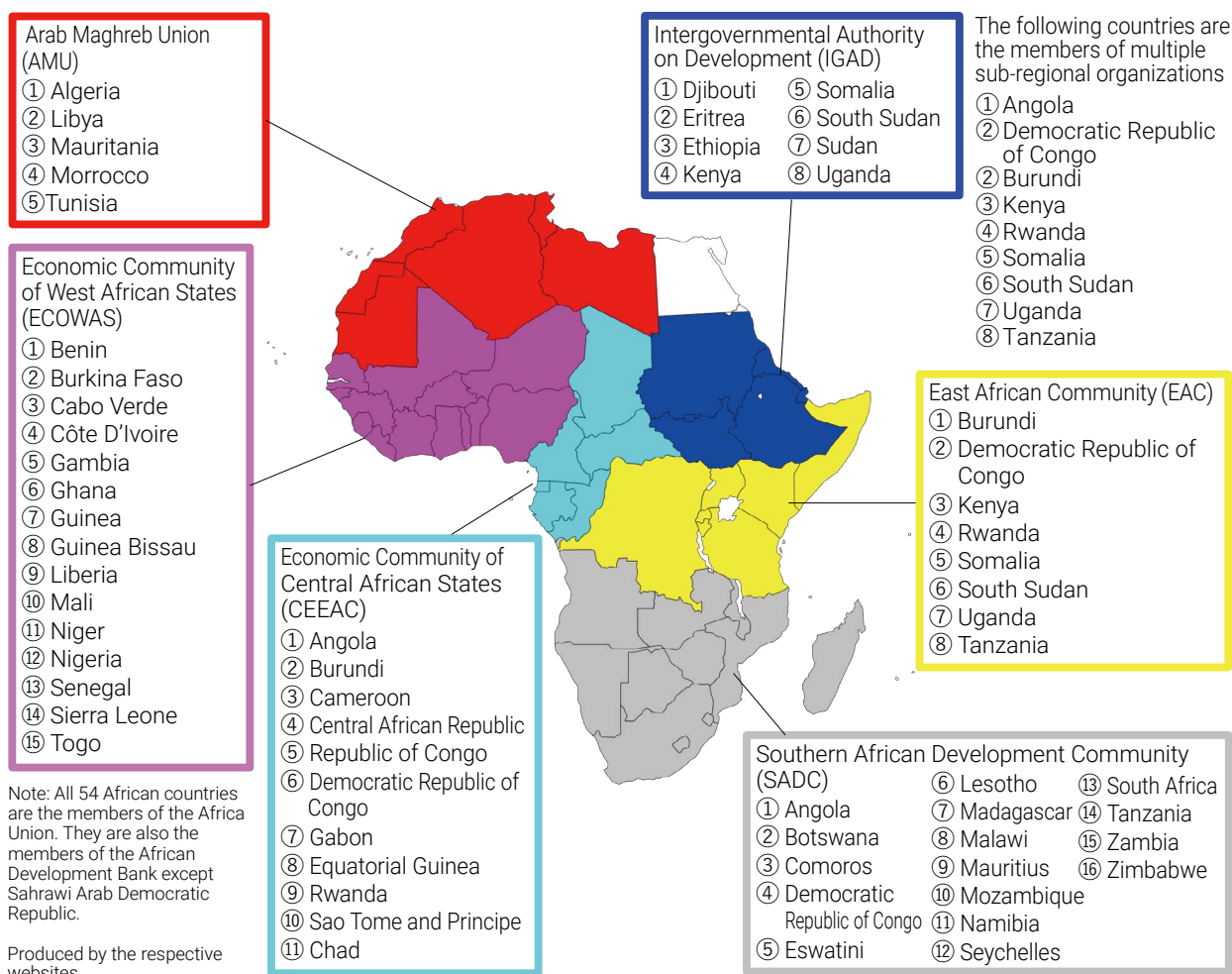


Figure 12: Sub-regional organizations in Africa

- UNESCO-IOC (2022) New roadmap sets out nine priority actions for the implementation of the Ocean Decade in Africa. https://oceandecade.org/news/new-roadmap-sets-out-nine-priority-actions-for-the-implementation-of-the-ocean-decade-in-africa/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.
- The Government of Kenya (2018) Report on the Global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, 26 – 28 November 2018. <http://kenyaforimo.kma.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/SBEC-FINAL-REPORT-8-DECEMBER-2018-rev-2-1-2-PDF2-3-compressed.pdf>.
- African Union (2019) Africa Blue Economy Strategy. <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/au228027.pdf>.
- Kobayashi, M. (2024) Leveraging the Blue Economy for Sustainable Development. In: Chakrabarty, M. and Neer, L. eds. After the Great Fall – Revival and Restoration in Africa. Observer Research Foundation, pp. 133-146.
- World Bank (2022) Blue economy in Africa: a synthesis <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/environment/brief/blue-economy-for-resilient-africa-program>.
- World Bank (2018) Seychelles launches World's First Sovereign Blue Bond. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/10/29/seychelles-launches-worlds-first-sovereign-blue-bond>.
- United Nations (2024) World Population Prospects 2024: Summary of Results.
- UN Economic Commission for Africa (2025) As Africa's Population Crosses 1.5 billion, The Demographic Window Is Opening; Getting the Dividend Requires More Time and Stronger Effort. <https://www.uneca.org/stories/%28blog%29-as-africa%E2%80%99s-population-crosses-1.5-billion%2C-the-demographic-window-is-opening-getting#:~:text=Africa%20has%20been%20at%20the,1%20in%2011%20in%201960>.
- Economic Commission for Africa, Africa's Statistics, <https://ecastats.uneca.org/data/>.
- Protected Planet, "Protected Area," 2024, <https://www.protectedplanet.net/en/thematic-areas/wdpa?tab=WDPA>.

High-Level Experts Meeting on the Africa Development Conference

1st Meeting– August 23, 2024

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Highlights of Discussion Outcomes

In preparation for the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to be held in Yokohama next August, and coinciding with the ministerial meeting scheduled for August 24–25, 2024, a High-Level Experts Meeting was convened. This meeting brought together stakeholders involved in African development and Japan-Africa cooperation to engage in discussions. The objective was to explore ways to further enhance the effectiveness of TICAD and promote meaningful Japan-Africa collaboration, review past achievements, consider future developments, and compile strategic proposals to be submitted to the Government of Japan. Key points discussed included:

- TICAD initially attracted significant international attention as a unique initiative led by Japan, including participation from African nations. However, with similar initiatives now being undertaken by China, the EU, South Korea, and Arab countries, it is necessary for Japan to reaffirm the distinctiveness and leadership of its approach to Africa.
- While broad and inclusive strategies are important, it is equally crucial to avoid vague or overly general discussions. **Emphasis should be placed on identifying concrete areas of cooperation**, especially in light of Africa's current challenges such as population growth, food insecurity, and youth unemployment. Deepening collaboration in high-impact sectors is considered an effective complementary approach.
- **Food security** remains a critical issue for Africa. Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture are areas where Japan excels and can offer unique support, making **the blue economy** a key pillar of Japan-Africa cooperation. In agriculture, **local fertilizer production** to improve soil fertility is seen as valuable. Other promising areas include **water resource management, healthcare, technical training for manufacturing (e.g., Japan's KOSEN system), human resource development, and investment**. These efforts are expected to contribute significantly to youth employment, which is essential for stable development in African regions.
- Beyond bilateral cooperation between Japan and African nations, frameworks such as South-South cooperation involving **ASEAN and India** are also considered effective.
- Strengthening intergovernmental dialogue is important. At the same time, promoting the participation of private companies and organizations is useful for more concrete collaboration with Africa. Inviting African business leaders and facilitating **business matching with Japanese companies** is seen as beneficial. Collaboration with **groups involving African entrepreneurs** and gathering insights from African practitioners and experts are also valuable.
- To engage in meaningful dialogue with influential African leaders, it is desirable to convene **eminent persons meetings** that allow for in-depth, candid discussions. Although a similar council was previously launched, it was held only once and did not continue.
- Gathering information from **African ambassadors to Japan**, African scholars, and **Japanese experts and practitioners** involved in African business, economics, and politics is useful. Insights from **JICA offices in Africa**, as well as from local experts and entrepreneurs, can help strengthen Japan-Africa cooperation.
- Information gathering through **regional African conferences, G20**, and other related forums is also beneficial.
- At TICAD, **setting up exhibition booths** to showcase the initiatives of African entrepreneurs to Japanese audiences is considered a valuable approach.

* TICAD Attached is a summary of the results of the discussions of the High-Level Expert Meeting.

The summary of results has been compiled by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, the secretariat, with key points deemed important.

High-Level Experts Meeting on the Africa Development Conference

2nd Meeting–October 4, 2024
The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Highlights of Discussion Outcomes

In preparation for the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) scheduled for next August, the second meeting of the High-Level Experts was convened to build momentum. The main points of discussion were as follows:

- **The backdrop of international cooperation surrounding Africa is undergoing significant changes.** In September 2024, Indonesia hosted the 2nd Indonesia–Africa Forum (September 1–3, in Bali), and China held the China–Africa Cooperation Forum Summit (September 2, in Beijing), both announcing new economic cooperation initiatives with Africa. BRICS is expected to expand beyond its original five members, with new members and partner countries such as Malaysia joining.
- Around the time of the 9th TICAD in 2025, Indonesia is also planning to host an international conference marking the 70th anniversary of the Bandung Conference. Meanwhile, African countries are demanding the withdrawal of French troops and reparations from the French government for colonial-era oppression. As the influence of the Global South, including BRICS, continues to grow, it is essential for **TICAD to clearly demonstrate its unique characteristics** in light of these geopolitical shifts.
- At the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in August, discussions focused on forward-looking solutions, youth and women, connectivity, and knowledge platforms. A joint communiqué was adopted, and expectations were expressed for further efforts to **strengthen Japan–Africa relations**, including through private investment. Gathering information on the potential application of tools such as the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) was also deemed useful.
- The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is implementing **wide-ranging projects** in Africa aligned with the African Union’s Agenda 2063, covering sectors such as industry, infrastructure, trade promotion, healthcare, education, agriculture, energy, peace and stability, entrepreneurship, and human resource development. **Entrepreneur support initiatives** like NINJA (Next Innovation with Japan) were highlighted as promising efforts with potential for further expansion.
- The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) has established offices in nine African countries to support the promotion of Japan–Africa economic relations. Africa’s economic scale is now comparable to that of Asia. JETRO is also supporting the creation of economic exchange opportunities through J-Bridge, a platform for **startup and new business development**, with a focus on **promising markets** and **the potential of hydrogen fuel**. An investment forum is scheduled to be held in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, in December.
- To strengthen Japan–Africa cooperation, it is important to refine **how partnerships are presented** and **how messages are communicated**. Understanding **Africa’s needs** and highlighting Japan’s unique contributions are essential. **Addressing the concerns of Africa’s growing youth population**, who are increasingly losing hope, is particularly important. Initiatives that promote **job creation** and **income generation** are aligned with the needs of many people.
- Japan–Africa cooperation in the blue economy remains relatively underdeveloped. Demonstrating Japan’s strengths in this area is valuable. Utilizing African workers as crew members on fishing vessels can contribute to job creation and income generation. Inland fisheries and aquaculture are also important in Africa. Developing a blue economy framework that encompasses both marine and inland waters would help address Africa’s diverse needs.

High-Level Experts Meeting on the Africa Development Conference

3rd Meeting–December 17, 2024

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Highlights of Discussion Outcomes

In preparation for the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) scheduled for August 2025, the third meeting of the High-Level Experts was convened to build momentum. The main points of discussion were as follows:

- It is essential to **promote investment and business development in Africa from a medium- to long-term perspective, including human resource development**. Enhancing knowledge and skills in agricultural work not only improves productivity but also ensures employment and income for workers, thereby increasing the effectiveness of projects and benefiting investors, workers, and local economies. In the fisheries sector, in some countries and regions, fish consumption culture and fishing as a livelihood are not yet widespread. Therefore, **resource management is necessary to prevent exploitative or excessive fishing** by distant-water fishing nations. In aquaculture, **the sustainability of feed** is a key issue. Imported fishmeal is expensive, and there are concerns that overfishing of small fish may lead to a decline in fish stocks. Securing affordable and sustainable feed is a challenge. It is desirable to **establish a cycle of human resource development and capacity building**, where young people come to Japan to train in agriculture and fisheries and then return to contribute to businesses in their home countries.
- While trade and investment with Africa are steadily growing, there are cases where Japanese investment is delayed due to cautious risk assessments. In a globalized economy, **the risk of inaction**—not engaging in economic exchange with Africa—should also be considered. Although the presence of Japanese companies in Africa is relatively limited in number, they have built a solid track record. As Africa’s economic structure and markets evolve, it is important to steadily establish **Japan’s presence in African value chains**, including procurement. In this context, **engagement with the younger generation** is crucial.
- Collaboration with Africa should be based on **co-creation, building programs that reflect Africa’s needs and realities**. Japan has a track record in areas such as human security, productivity improvement through “Kaizen” management practices, and the empowerment and promotion of smallholder horticulture (SHEP: Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment & Promotion). In the fisheries sector, **cooperation in areas such as fish stocking, aquaculture, and food culture—where Japan has strengths**—is considered valuable.
- Political changes are occurring in Africa, including regime changes and declining support for ruling parties. These shifts are often rooted in economic hardship and unemployment. In this context, Japan’s cooperation with Africa in areas such as job creation and food security is highly meaningful. **Based on developments in Africa and the global landscape, it is expected that effective Japan–Africa cooperation** will be further promoted.
- Recognizing the strategic importance of Africa for Japan, it is necessary to deepen discussions on specific key issues. Establishing **opportunities for regular exchanges—where African leaders, experts, and think tank representatives visit Japan or are visited annually**—would demonstrate Japan’s proactive and sustained engagement with Africa to both domestic and international audiences.

High-Level Experts Meeting on the Africa Development Conference

4th Meeting – January 27, 2025
The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Highlights of Discussion Outcomes

In preparation for the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) scheduled for August 2025, the fourth meeting of the High-Level Experts was convened to build momentum. The main points of discussion were as follows:

- When conducting business in Africa, it is essential not only to build a model that generates profits but also to simultaneously **improve the livelihoods of local residents**. **Establishing healthy communities**, improving access to schools, clinics, and sanitation, and creating safe and secure living and working environments are critical.
- It is important to ensure that the shift from aid to investment is accompanied by substance. To promote investment in Africa, institutional development, policy dialogue, and information sharing must be advanced. **Establishing impact funds in collaboration with institutions such as the African Development Bank** to generate socioeconomic benefits—such as improved livelihoods, increased income, and job creation—is considered effective.
- Human resource development is a key element. **Providing learning opportunities**, education, and training for young people—either in Japan or locally—**through personnel exchanges** is essential to fostering talent.
- Business models aimed at solving social issues have been steadily developed and implemented. **The TICAD framework has facilitated dialogue and exchange between heads of state and private sector leaders**, contributing to the launch and expansion of various initiatives.
- In addition to providing quantitative and qualitative data on support, investment, and cooperation outcomes, **compiling and sharing collections of best practices is a useful approach to expanding Japan–Africa collaboration**.
- Projects and business models that respond to the needs and priorities of developing countries—such as optimal delivery of malaria vaccines, environmentally conscious business models, and capacity building—have been steadily implemented in cooperation with African governments and local stakeholders. **It is important to design initiatives that are aligned with Africa’s specific needs and priorities**.
- A key consideration is how to promote regional-scale business development in Africa. **Projects should be tailored to the characteristics and trends** of subregions such as Anglophone, Francophone, and West Africa.
- The Japan–Africa Public-Private Economic Forum and the Africa Business Council, which was established as a result of the forum, have functioned **as institutional frameworks supporting Japanese companies’ entry into African markets**. There is a need to consider how to support companies exploring business opportunities in Africa. Supporting companies that have already entered the Indian market to expand into Africa is also seen as beneficial. Strengthening financial support for companies entering Africa is important, and programs that promote businesses addressing development challenges in emerging countries are considered effective.
- The potential for **supporting African startups and applying digital solutions** is attracting attention.
- Collaboration in priority areas identified by **the African Development Bank’s “High 5”**—namely energy, food production, industrial strengthening, regional integration, and improved livelihoods—is considered valuable.

ⁱ Members of the High-Level Experts Group on TICAD
(Titles as of the time of the meetings; honorifics omitted)

Yohei Sasakawa	Chairman of The Nippon Foundation
Mitsuya Araki	Advisor of the International Development Journal Co., Ltd.
Masato Kitanaka	President of The Sasakawa Africa Association
Atsushi Sunami	President of The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Experts and practitioners who provided input during the meetings
(Titles as of the time of the meetings; honorifics omitted)

Naoki Ando	Senior Vice President, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
Mutsuo Iwai	Chairperson of the Board, Japan Tobacco Inc. (Former Chairman of the Board, Africa Project Team, Japan Association of Corporate Executives)
Shinichiro Otsuka	COO for Africa Division, Toyota Tsusho Corporation (Assistant to CEO, I/O Africa Pole)
Osamu Kasai	Director of the Asia External Representation Office, African Development Bank
Ken Shibusawa	CEO, Shibusawa & Company, Inc.; Chair, Global South and Africa-Committee, Keizai Doyukai (Japan Association of Corporate Executives)
Keiichi Shirato	Professor, College of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University
Takako Tsujisaka	Deputy Director-General for International Trade Policy, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
Susumu Tsubaki	Representative Partner, AAIC
Kazuya Nakajo	Executive Vice President, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)
Toshihiko Horiuchi	Assistant Minister and Director-General for African Affairs Department, Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Yoichi Mine	Executive Director, JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development