

Egypt, with its extensive coastlines along the Mediterranean and Red Seas, has significant potential to harness the blue economy's opportunities, which include sectors like tourism, fisheries, maritime transport, and renewable energy. The roadmap seeks to integrate sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices within these sectors, ensuring that economic growth does not come at the expense of environmental degradation. The roadmap is a response to the increasing pressures from climate change, pollution, and unsustainable resource exploitation on Egypt's coastal and marine ecosystems.

The Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)

CEDARE is an international inter-governmental organization established in 1992. It aims to promote sustainable development by integrating environmental considerations into policies and practices across five priority areas: water resources management, land resources management, information technologies, sustainable growth, and environmental governance. CEDARE emphasizes public participation and strives to implement the Global Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.



Funded by the European Union



The UNEP and CEDARE partnership under the EU-funded SwitchMed Programme engaged in the development of the Blue Economy Roadmap aiming to promote sustainable marine and coastal eco-practices in Egypt with a focus on enhancing the economic, environmental, and social benefits of coastal and marine resources.

KEY DEFINITION

Within the Egyptian context, the interpretation of the blue economy extends beyond ocean-centric sectors. The concept of blue economy in the Egyptian context refers to *an economy that is associated with the sustainable utilization of water resources such as oceans, seas, lakes, and rivers to achieve economic growth and social well-being. This involves providing adequate means of livelihood, creating employment opportunities, and ensuring food security for future generations while guaranteeing respect for the environment, cultural values, and biodiversity.*

CHALLENGES

The roadmap identifies several challenges that could hinder the development of the blue economy in Egypt:

- **Overcapacity and Unsustainable Tourism Practices:** The rapid growth of tourism, particularly in the Red Sea region, has led to overcapacity and unsustainable practices that threaten the health of marine ecosystems.
- **Environmental and Social Pressures:** Pollution, coastal erosion, and the impacts of climate change pose significant threats to Egypt's coastal and marine environments.
- **Institutional Limitations:** Despite the establishment of protected areas, the enforcement of environmental regulations and effective management of these areas remain challenging.





STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

The roadmap proposes four key strategic interventions to achieve its objectives:

1. Aligning Eco-Tourism with Marine Conservation

This intervention focuses on ensuring that eco-tourism practices support marine conservation and biodiversity protection. It includes actions such as promoting sustainable tourism activities that do not harm the environment and developing guidelines for responsible tourism in marine protected areas.

2. Diversifying Eco-Tourism Practices:

To reduce pressure on over-visited sites, the roadmap advocates for diversifying eco-tourism offerings by enhancing infrastructure and developing new attractions that highlight the natural and cultural heritage of lesser-known areas.

3. Activating Eco-Tourism for Climate Resilience

This intervention aims to integrate climate resilience into eco-tourism practices, ensuring that tourism infrastructure and activities can adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

4. Community Empowerment and Heritage Preservation:

By focusing on community involvement and the preservation of cultural heritage, this intervention seeks to ensure that eco-tourism supports local livelihoods and protects the cultural and natural assets of coastal communities.

KEY SUCCESS ENABLERS

- **Alignment with National Strategies:** The roadmap must align with Egypt's broader national strategies, such as the National Climate Change Strategy and the Sustainable Development Strategy 2030, to ensure coherence and effective implementation.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Continuous engagement with government agencies, local communities, the private sector, and international partners is crucial for successful implementation.
- **Institutional Oversight:** A dedicated oversight body, likely led by the Ministry of Environment, is necessary to monitor and ensure the effective execution of strategic interventions.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** A robust framework with clear key performance indicators (KPIs) and timelines is needed to track and evaluate the progress of the roadmap's interventions.

The Blue Economy Roadmap is a strategy to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship in Egypt's coastal and marine regions. By focusing on sustainable eco-tourism, pollution reduction, and community empowerment, it aims to protect marine ecosystems while supporting economic growth. Success depends on strong institutional oversight, stakeholder collaboration, and a commitment to sustainability across the blue economy.

For more information please contact: luc.reuter@un.org; chang.yan@un.org

United Nations Environment Programme

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading environmental authority in the United Nations system. UNEP uses its expertise to strengthen environmental standards and practices while helping implement environmental obligations at the country, regional and global levels. UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.



The SwitchMed programme is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by UNEP. It aims at achieving a Circular Economy in the southern Mediterranean by changing the way goods and services are produced and consumed. To achieve this, the SwitchMed provides tools and services directly to the private sector, supports an enabling policy environment, and facilitates exchange of information among partners and key stakeholders. www.switchmed.eu