

ECA CONTRIBUTION TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL REPORT

ON OCEANS AND LAW OF THE SEAS:

Oceans and sustainable development – *integration of economic, environmental and social.*

1. Context:

African Small Island Developing States (Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea Bissau, Mauritius, Sao Tome & Principe and Seychelles) are made of small land masses but large ocean space. The Seychelles for example, has only 454km² of land but 1.4 million square kilometers ocean whose potentials are yet to be fully exploited for development. The large Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of these countries provide global trade routes and fishing space which are exploited illegally by other nations, as the capacity of African SIDS to harness their ocean resources is highly limited by the absence of appropriate technology.

The sparse geographical distribution of African islands seriously hampers the economic prosperity of these countries, especially as these physical features exert high transport and transaction costs on goods for international markets. Their dependency on imported fossil fuels exposes them to interminable fluctuations in oil prices. Furthermore, their small markets and low purchasing power make SIDS unattractive for foreign investors which in turn decreases foreign direct investments; thus, impeding growth and economic development.

Added to these economic challenges are the impacts of climate change on these islands whose human resource capacity to respond to such challenges is very limited. In spite of these location challenges, the large EEZ of SIDS have huge resource potential that could be harnessed in a sustainable manner for transforming the economies of island states and addressing the impacts that climate change has on their overall development. This would boost the capacity of the countries to build resilience, while keeping climate change impacts at bay.

Hence, harnessing ocean resources and marine services is critical for the sust TcT 0 9T (fuel, to the of 10-

In recognition of the continent's enormous oceans potential which remains largely, African Heads of State and Government decided to embrace the green economic development pathway

that includes blue economy. Consequently, the Africa Agenda 2063 will include a chapter to guide the continent's pursuit of a Blue Economy development model for African SIDS.

Guided by the decision of the African leaders on SIDS development and by ECA's regional mandate of supporting the continent in meeting its economic aspirations, ECA is supporting Africa's Small Island Developing States to implement the decision of the African Heads of State and Government as highlighted in the Malabo Declaration, as well as in the Samoa Pathway to

