

南部アフリカ持続可能なブルーエコノミー推進に向けた
リーダー育成プログラムの構築とスタートアップ支援制度
設計に関するワークショップ

報告書

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2025年3月

南アフリカおよび南部アフリカにおける持続可能なブルーエコノミーの推進は海洋保全と持続可能な海洋資源の利用に重要な施策と推進されている。ネルソンマンデラ大学 (NMU)、南アフリカ国際海事研究所 (SAIMI)、NMU 沿岸海洋研究所 (IMCR) が南アフリカの政策の下で研究や教育、人材育成の面で重要な役割を果たしてきている。ブルーエコノミーの推進には、従来型の学術分野に特化した教育だけではなく、分離融合型の知見やステークホルダー連携推進等の技能など、より実践的で学際的な知見や技能の共有が重視されている。そうした観点から、ブルーエコノミー推進に向けた実践・学際的リーダー育成プログラムと起業家・スタートアップ支援制度の構築に関するワークショップを 2025 年 3 月 26 日にネルソンマンデラ大学で開催した。

ワークショップでは、アフリカ・南部アフリカにおけるブルーエコノミー推進に向けた課題が議論された。海洋保全や海洋生産性の向上のみならず、若者の失業や就業機会創出の必要性など広範な政策目的実現に向け、リーダーシップ育成プログラムを早期に実施する有用性が強調された。海洋・沿岸資源管理をめぐる複雑な利害関係が増大しており、革新的な対応の重要性が指摘された。海洋の健全性も重要課題として指摘され、地球規模の持続可能性、社会経済的安定性、地域社会の生計改善などとの連動の重要性が強調された。ブルーエコノミーは、海洋資源を持続的に利用することで、経済成長、生活向上、持続可能な社会の実現につながると想定されており、そのためのリーダーシップ育成プログラム、科学的理解と政策立案の連動、民間企業ビジネス戦略、地域社会との格差是正、政策立案・ビジネス戦略、地域社会での解決策実施のための能力構築、多様なセクター・ステークホルダー間の協働、イノベーション、ステークホルダー・ファシリテーション技能育成などが重要課題として挙げられた。変革の原動力となる指導力・実践力あるリーダーを育成することが重要で、そのためには、包括的かつ実践的、戦略的なプログラムの設計が重視されている。また研修手法として、教室内での議論だけではなく、現場でのフィールドワーク、共同作業の実践等も有用視されている。こうした取り組みは、参加者が理論的な概念を理解するだけでなく、実社会に応用するための実践的な洞察も得られるようにする上で重要と指摘されています。重視されている視点・項目として、挙げられている点としては、地域コラボレーション、リーダーシップ・スキルの育成、効果的な持続可能性の実践、実践的応用力の強化、包括性・包摂性、メンターとの長期・継続的接点、地球規模と地域社会の連動等がある。

この他、こうしたリーダー育成プログラムは、南アフリカだけではなく、南部アフリカおよびその周辺地域をも対象とする有用性が指摘された。共通する課題を取り上げることも重要との指摘があり、漁業資源の乱獲、栄養汚染、沿岸資源の劣化、社会経済的格差是正に向けた取り組みの重要性などがあげられた。などの課題に取り組むためのツールと知識を得る。そのための知見や技能の習得、フィールドワークや実践的な教育内容・モジュールの構築の重要性が指摘された。

広域的地域連携としては、越境型環境管理や連携などを視野に、南アフリカ、モザンビーク、ナミビア、アンゴラといった国々にまたがる地域的な協力関係を重視することで、共通の課題に取り組み、国境を越えたパートナーシップを促進によりプログラムの効果の波及拡充を目指す意義は高いとの指摘があった。また、仮説的なビジネスモデルの開発など、実用的な成果物案といった素材の作成やそれらに基づく実践的議論なども有用視できるといった話があった。

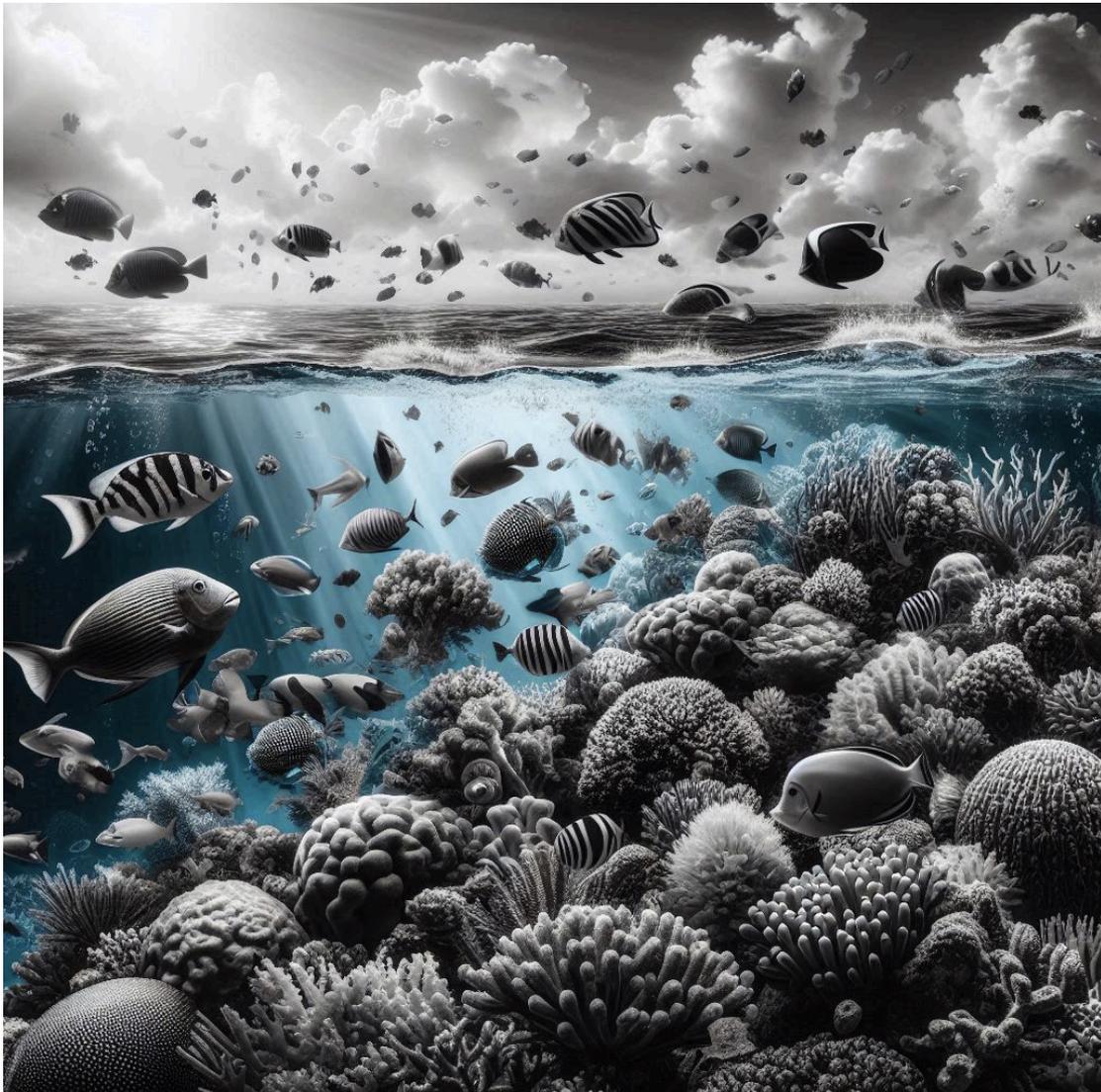
この他、メンターシップとの関連では、メンターやパートナーの長期的な関与、キャリア構築などを組み込むことが有用との指摘があった。このほか連携団体との連携強化も重要視されるといった指摘があり、学術機関、産業関係者、国際機関との戦略的パートナーシップ構築が重要といった点も強調された。地域社会の専門知識の統合や、国際的視点から見た優良事例などを活用することも重要といった指摘があった。

こうした議論を踏まえ、持続可能なブルーエコノミー推進に向け短期集中型の実践・学際的なリーダー育成プログラムの実施を模索していく意義が共有され、今後、必要な準備を進めていくことが確認された。

**Report on the feasibility study regarding the pragmatic
and interdisciplinary program on leadership
development and start-up support designing for
sustainable blue economies in Southern Africa**

Nelson Mandela University
Ocean Science Campus
26-27 March 2025

Final Report



Prepared by: Brandon Gopaul

Table of Contents

Overview	Page 3
Objectives	Page 4-6
Program Structure	Page 7-9
Challenges	Page 10-12
Partnerships	Page 13-15
Next Steps	Page 16-18
Proposal	Page 19-21
Conclusion	Page 22-23

Overview

The discussions from the workshop emphasized the urgent need for a leadership development program tailored to address critical issues within the blue economy. This initiative represents an innovative response to the growing complexities surrounding marine and coastal resource management. With the health of oceans directly linked to global sustainability, socio-economic stability, and the livelihoods of countless communities, the program seeks to empower future leaders with the interdisciplinary knowledge and skills necessary to confront these challenges head on.

The blue economy, defined as the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and ecosystem health, has emerged as a vital area of focus for regions like Southern Africa. The proposed leadership development program aims to bridge the gap between scientific understanding, policy making, business strategies, and community level solutions by fostering collaboration and innovation across diverse sectors. By equipping participants with the ability to navigate this complex interplay, the program aspires to create impactful leaders capable of driving transformative change.

The initiative is strategically designed to be both comprehensive and pragmatic. It integrates classroom modules, hands on fieldwork, and collaborative assignments to ensure participants not only understand theoretical concepts but also gain practical insights into real world applications. This approach aligns closely with the principles of sustainability and equity, ensuring that no community is left behind in the quest for progress.

Targeting postgraduate students and young professionals, the program promises to be inclusive and accessible, bringing together participants with varied backgrounds from countries such as South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola. This diversity enhances regional collaboration and strengthens the program's potential to address shared priorities in marine conservation, resource management, and economic development.

Furthermore, the program aligns with international frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and marine policy. It seeks to catalyze innovation and entrepreneurship, fostering the creation of sustainable business ventures that leverage marine resources responsibly and equitably.

By emphasizing interdisciplinary education and leadership, the program aspires to establish itself as a cornerstone for addressing ocean conservation challenges, socio economic disparities, and regional development. Through this initiative, future leaders will be equipped to champion sustainability and resilience, laying the foundation for thriving blue economies that benefit both people and the planet.

Objectives

Interdisciplinary Knowledge Development

The program aims to equip participants with a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness of disciplines crucial to the blue economy. This involves bridging gaps between natural sciences, social sciences, and business strategies, enabling participants to address complex marine and coastal challenges holistically. The program integrates topics such as marine science, policy making, economics, and financial management to foster a robust foundation of knowledge.

- *Objective:* Ensure participants can analyze and devise innovative solutions that balance ecological sustainability with socio economic benefits.
- *Outcome:* Graduates capable of contextualizing and addressing challenges within marine resource management, fisheries, and aquaculture.

Sustainable Business and Entrepreneurship

A central pillar of the program is to promote innovative and sustainable business models that leverage marine resources responsibly. By providing insights into financial management, entrepreneurship, and sustainability practices, the program supports participants in creating ventures aligned with ecological and economic goals.

- *Objective:* Empower participants to conceptualize and implement projects that contribute to a sustainable blue economy.
- *Outcome:* Participants presenting hypothetical business models for eco friendly aquaculture, sustainable fisheries, or community focused marine tourism.

Regional Collaboration

Recognizing the shared marine challenges faced by Southern African nations such as South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola, the program emphasizes regional cooperation. Through collaboration, participants gain exposure to diverse perspectives, fostering collective solutions for ocean conservation and socio-economic development.

- *Objective:* Strengthen regional ties and develop networks for knowledge exchange and joint problem solving.
- *Outcome:* A community of leaders working collaboratively on cross border marine issues, such as illegal fishing and resource management.

Fostering Leadership Skills

The program is designed to cultivate leadership qualities by focusing on decision making, stakeholder engagement, and governance in the marine context. Leadership modules emphasize inclusivity, equity, and the ability to navigate complex socio political and ecological landscapes.

- *Objective:* Prepare participants to lead initiatives that address marine conservation, policy making, and community development.
- *Outcome:* Emerging leaders equipped to influence policy and implement effective sustainable practices.

Enhancing Practical Application

The curriculum goes beyond theoretical knowledge by including hands on fieldwork and real world problem solving opportunities. Field visits to conservation sites, aquaculture farms, and marine industries provide practical exposure, complementing classroom modules.

- *Objective:* Equip participants with tools to apply interdisciplinary insights to tangible challenges in their professional and community contexts.
- *Outcome:* Leaders with hands on experience in addressing nutrient pollution, ecosystem degradation, and sustainable fisheries management.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

Targeting young professionals and postgraduate students with diverse backgrounds, the program ensures inclusivity by accommodating participants with varying levels of expertise. Accessibility is a core focus, with efforts to align program scheduling with academic and professional commitments.

- *Objective:* Foster a diverse, inclusive environment that welcomes participants from various cultural, academic, and professional contexts.
- *Outcome:* A rich learning environment driven by the interplay of diverse perspectives and expertise.

Alignment with Global and Regional Frameworks

The program is meticulously designed to align with international frameworks like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Development Summit, and other regional blue economy strategies. This alignment ensures that the program not only addresses local challenges but also contributes to global sustainability efforts.

- *Objective:* Position the program as a model initiative addressing the dual priorities of marine conservation and socio economic growth.
- *Outcome:* Participants emerging as advocates and practitioners of sustainable development, with an acute understanding of global and regional frameworks.

Mentorship and Long-term Support

Long term mentorship opportunities are embedded within the program to ensure continued professional growth and impact. Networks of experts, industry leaders, and academics provide guidance to participants beyond the duration of the program.

- *Objective:* Establish a support system that nurtures leadership and innovation in the blue economy over time.
- *Outcome:* Sustainable professional development for participants, fostering a new generation of impactful leaders.

Program Structure

Duration and Format

The leadership development program is proposed as a one-week intensive course, strategically aligned with academic breaks (such as summer holidays or research weeks) to maximize participation. However, opportunities to extend the program to 2–3 weeks for enhanced engagement could be explored. The format is designed to combine theoretical instruction, practical application, and participant led deliverables to create a dynamic and impactful learning experience.

Core Components

- **Classroom Modules:** The program incorporates a diverse set of thematic classroom based modules aimed at building an interdisciplinary foundation for sustainable blue economies. Modules include:
 - *Human Resources and Leadership:* Fostering leadership skills and stakeholder engagement techniques.
 - *Oceanography, Biology, and Ecology:* Providing participants with essential scientific insights into marine systems.
 - *Earth Sciences:* Exploring geology, climate change, and ecosystem dynamics as they relate to marine resource management.
 - *Policy Studies:* Analyzing policy frameworks that govern marine conservation and development.
 - *Economics and Sociology:* Understanding market forces, socio economic challenges, and community dynamics.
 - *Management Studies:* Equipping participants with organizational and business management strategies tailored to the blue economy.

Field Visits

Practical exposure is a cornerstone of the program. Participants will engage in field visits to marine conservation sites, aquaculture farms, fisheries, and other relevant locations. These visits aim to:

- Provide hands on learning opportunities by observing real world applications of sustainable practices.
- Enhance understanding of challenges like nutrient pollution, overfishing, and conservation efforts.
- Inspire innovative approaches by highlighting successful marine resource management practices.

Participant Deliverables

To consolidate learning, participants will develop and present hypothetical business models for sustainable ventures within the blue economy. Deliverables could include:

- Business plans addressing challenges such as sustainable aquaculture or eco tourism.
- Case studies focused on practical solutions for coastal community development.
- Innovative ideas leveraging technologies like vessel tracking or carbon sequestration tools to address marine challenges.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

The program ensures inclusivity by targeting young professionals and postgraduate students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. To enhance accessibility, considerations include:

- Structuring course content to cater to participants with varying levels of expertise.
- Offering certification mechanisms to increase professional credibility.
- Exploring online or hybrid formats to accommodate participants who may face geographical or financial barriers.

Certification

A certification mechanism will be incorporated to provide participants with formal acknowledgment of their achievements. This not only enhances professional credibility but also incentivizes participation by making the program a valuable addition to academic and career portfolios.

Alignment with Academic and Professional Calendars

The program is designed to fit seamlessly within participant's schedules, such as university breaks or professional research weeks. This alignment ensures that the program is accessible to a wider audience without disrupting their existing commitments.

Potential Enhancements

While the current structure focuses on short term impact, there are opportunities to integrate additional elements for long term engagement, such as:

- *Pre course Preparation:* Providing participants with reading materials, short exercises, or digital content to ensure readiness.
- *Hybrid Learning Models:* Combining intensive in person training with online modules to maximize flexibility.
- *Long Term Support:* Establishing mentorship networks and follow up initiatives to sustain professional development and program impact.

Program Evaluation and Feedback

Mechanisms for measuring outcomes and gathering participant feedback will be crucial to refine future iterations of the program. Proposed evaluation strategies include:

- Participant surveys to assess the quality and relevance of course content.
- Monitoring the implementation of participant proposals within their respective contexts.
- Engaging an advisory committee to review program performance and suggest improvements.

Challenges

Coordination with Regional Universities

- *Logistical Complexity:* Identifying and inviting participants from various institutions in Southern Africa poses a significant logistical challenge. Each university has unique academic calendars, internal approval processes, and participation criteria, which need to be synchronized for efficient coordination.
- *Access to Resources:* Ensuring that smaller or rural universities are equally represented in the program requires strategic outreach and collaboration. Many such institutions may lack the financial or logistical resources to send participants, making inclusivity efforts particularly important.

Securing Funding for Logistics

- *Faculty Remuneration:* Recruiting top notch faculty across interdisciplinary fields such as marine sciences, social sciences, and business will require competitive remuneration packages. This adds to the financial strain on program organizers.
- *Travel Costs for International Attendees:* The program's regional nature means travel costs for participants and faculty from neighboring countries such as Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola must be factored into the budget.
- *Operational Expenses:* Beyond travel, expenses like venue rentals, course materials, and field visit logistics need sustainable funding mechanisms to ensure program success.

Balancing Course Content Accessibility

- *Diverse Expertise Levels:* Participants are likely to come from varied academic and professional backgrounds, ranging from marine biology to policy making and business. Crafting course content that is accessible yet impactful for all levels of expertise presents a significant challenge.
- *Language Barriers:* Regional diversity also means participants may have varying levels of proficiency in the program's primary language of instruction, which could affect engagement and learning outcomes.
- *Customization for Interests:* The program must cater to broad themes while also allowing participants to focus on specific areas of interest, such as aquaculture or marine policy.

Retention of Trained Professionals

- *Brain Drain:* Africa has historically struggled with retaining skilled professionals, as many pursue opportunities abroad due to limited career prospects locally. This program must address how to encourage participants to apply their knowledge and skills within their home countries.
- *Long term Engagement:* Creating mechanisms for alumni engagement and professional development is crucial to ensuring participants continue to contribute to regional blue economy goals after completing the program.

Resource Allocation and Inclusivity

- *Geographic Representation:* Ensuring equitable representation from coastal and inland regions within Southern Africa is vital. Coastal regions often dominate discussions related to the blue economy, leaving inland perspectives overlooked despite their importance in related industries like fisheries and water resource management.
- *Underrepresented Groups:* Promoting inclusivity for groups such as women, indigenous communities, and economically disadvantaged participants requires targeted outreach and support, such as scholarships or fee waivers.

Alignment with Academic and Professional Calendars

- *Timing Constraints:* Aligning the program schedule with academic breaks or research weeks can be challenging, especially considering variations between institutions and countries.
- *Work Commitments:* Many professionals may struggle to participate in an intensive program due to work obligations, necessitating flexible options like hybrid learning models.

Sustainability of Funding

- *Dependence on External Grants:* Relying on grants from international organizations or private sponsors may be unsustainable in the long term. Creating local funding models, such as industry partnerships or government support, could address this challenge.
- *Ethical Considerations:* Ensuring funding sources align with the program's principles of sustainability and equity is critical, as partnerships with environmentally or socially irresponsible entities could undermine credibility.

Regional Collaboration and Governance

- *Policy Integration:* Aligning the program's outcomes with diverse national policies across countries like South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola is complex due to differences in governance structures and legal frameworks.
- *Cross Border Collaboration:* Facilitating effective collaboration among participants and stakeholders from different countries requires overcoming bureaucratic hurdles and potential political tensions.

Evaluation and Impact Measurement

- *Tracking Success:* Measuring the long term impact of the program on participant's careers and contributions to the blue economy poses a challenge. Developing robust evaluation mechanisms, such as surveys and performance tracking, is critical.
- *Scalability:* Ensuring that lessons learned from the pilot program can be scaled effectively across other regions or participant groups requires careful planning.

Global Versus Local Focus

- *Balancing Priorities:* While the program must align with international frameworks like the SDGs, it also needs to address hyper local challenges specific to Southern Africa. Striking this balance is crucial for relevance and impact.
- *Cultural Adaptation:* Integrating indigenous knowledge and practices into the curriculum can enrich the program but requires sensitivity to cultural differences and traditions.

Partnerships

Regional Universities

Role: Universities in Southern Africa, including institutions from South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, and neighboring countries, can serve as both participants and academic contributors to the program. Their involvement ensures local context is integrated into the curriculum and provides access to motivated postgraduate students and professionals.

- *Opportunities:* Collaborating with universities to co develop course modules, provide faculty expertise, and offer program accreditation. Universities can also assist in outreach to identify participants with diverse academic backgrounds.
- *Strategic Impact:* By leveraging the educational strengths of these institutions, the program can establish a robust academic foundation while fostering long term regional collaboration in marine conservation and resource management.

Industry Stakeholders

- *Fisheries Sector:* Local and regional fisheries can provide practical insights into sustainable practices, as well as challenges faced in resource management, overfishing, and aquaculture development. These stakeholders are uniquely positioned to bridge theoretical learning with real world applications.
- *Tourism Enterprises:* Sustainable tourism businesses, such as marine eco tourism ventures, can showcase innovative business models that prioritize conservation while generating revenue.
- *Potential Contributions:* Industry stakeholders can participate by hosting field visits, sharing case studies, and mentoring participants in entrepreneurship and sustainable business practices.
- *Impact on Participants:* Exposure to real world challenges and innovations from industry leaders will inspire participants to develop practical, impactful solutions tailored to regional needs.

International Organizations

- *Marine Conservation:* International organizations focused on marine conservation, such as UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, can contribute technical knowledge, funding opportunities, and global best practices.
- *Entrepreneurship Support:* Entities like the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and entrepreneurial networks like Global Impact Investing Network can offer insights into sustainable funding models and provide mentorship for business oriented initiatives.
- *Collaboration Opportunities:* These organizations can assist with capacity building workshops, sponsor program logistics, and provide expertise on aligning the program with international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Government Agencies

- *National Governments:* Engaging government bodies from participating countries ensures policy alignment and resource allocation to support the program. Departments specializing in marine resources, fisheries, and coastal management are vital collaborators.
- *Regional Agencies:* Organizations such as the African Union and SADC (Southern African Development Community) can provide a regional perspective and facilitate cross border cooperation.
- *Role in Program Success:* Government partnerships can amplify the program's reach, provide funding support, and ensure the integration of policy driven approaches into training modules.

Community Based Organizations and NGOs

- *Role of NGOs:* Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working on marine conservation, livelihoods, and socio economic development can bring grassroots perspectives to the program.
- *Empowering Communities:* Partnering with organizations that specialize in community driven projects ensures that indigenous knowledge systems and local practices are integrated into training modules. This fosters inclusivity and aligns with the program's focus on equity and sustainability.
- *Long Term Impact:* Community organizations can help track the program's impact on local communities and support its participants in implementing solutions post training.

Private Sector Partnerships

- *Corporate Sponsorships:* Engaging private entities committed to sustainability, such as renewable energy companies or eco friendly businesses, can provide funding and technical expertise.
- *Technology Providers:* Companies specializing in marine technology, like vessel tracking systems or aquaculture equipment, can contribute innovative solutions for hands on learning and entrepreneurship modules.
- *Strategic Value:* Private sector involvement ensures financial sustainability and encourages the development of technologies aligned with program goals.

Academic and Research Networks

- *International Collaborations:* Partnerships with global research networks and academic institutions can enhance the program's curriculum by incorporating cutting edge research on marine resource management and sustainable practices.
- *Workshops and Exchange Programs:* Organizing collaborative workshops with researchers and facilitating student exchange programs can enrich the learning experience for participants.
- *Knowledge Sharing:* Academic networks provide a platform for knowledge sharing and disseminating findings that contribute to global sustainability goals.

Cross Sector Collaborations

- *Multi Stakeholder Engagement:* Establishing partnerships across sectors ensures that various perspectives, including scientific, industrial, and socio economic, are represented in the program.
- *Advisory Committees:* Forming advisory committees composed of stakeholders from universities, industries, NGOs, and governments can guide program execution and ensure alignment with its objectives.
- *Outcome:* Collaborative efforts enhance program credibility, enrich content, and foster innovation in addressing marine and coastal challenges.

Next Steps

Finalize Participant Criteria

- *Target Audience:* Clearly define the eligibility criteria for participants, focusing on postgraduate students and early career professionals with a demonstrated interest in sustainable blue economy themes. This will ensure that attendees are motivated and able to fully engage with the program.
- *Inclusivity and Diversity:* Develop outreach strategies to attract participants from underrepresented groups, including women, indigenous communities, and individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- *Screening Process:* Establish a transparent selection process involving application forms, statements of interest, and references to identify candidates who align with the program's goals.

Develop a Detailed Syllabus

Core Modules: Build a comprehensive syllabus with modules covering key themes such as:

- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Marine Policy and Governance
- Climate Change Mitigation and Nature Based Solutions
- Entrepreneurship and Financial Management in the Blue Economy
- Ecosystem Based Approaches and Conservation Strategies

Customizable Content: Design elective modules to address specific areas of interest, allowing participants to tailor their learning experience.

Pre Course Preparation: Provide participants with preparatory reading materials, recorded lectures, or interactive exercises to ensure they are familiar with foundational concepts before the program begins.

Engage Academic and Industry Experts

- *Faculty Recruitment:* Identify and secure a diverse team of academic and industry professionals to lead lectures, workshops, and mentorship sessions. Ensure that the faculty represents a mix of regional and international expertise to provide a well rounded perspective.
- *Guest Speakers and Mentors:* Invite prominent figures from the blue economy sector, such as policymakers, entrepreneurs, and conservationists, to share practical insights and success stories.
- *Capacity Building:* Develop faculty training sessions to ensure consistency in the delivery of interdisciplinary content.

Identify and Confirm Funding Sources

Budget Planning: Create a detailed budget that includes costs for faculty remuneration, participant travel and accommodations, course materials, field visits, and certification.

Funding Mechanisms: Explore diverse funding opportunities, such as:

- Public and private partnerships with industries like fisheries, marine technology, and sustainable tourism.
- Grants from international organizations, such as the UNDP, African Development Bank, or World Bank.
- Scholarships and sponsorships for economically disadvantaged participants.

Ethical Alignment: Ensure that funding sources align with the program's sustainability principles to maintain credibility and integrity.

Establish Participant Selection and Registration Mechanisms

- *Application Portal:* Develop a user friendly online platform for participants to submit their applications, including personal information, academic background, and motivation statements.
- *Selection Committee:* Form a committee comprising academic, industry, and NGO representatives to review applications and finalize participant selection.
- *Registration Process:* Create an efficient registration system with clear guidelines on participation fees, if applicable, and payment options.

Pilot the Program

- *Trial Run:* Conduct a pilot version of the program with a smaller group of participants to test the syllabus, logistical arrangements, and faculty performance.
- *Feedback Mechanisms:* Develop feedback forms and conduct surveys to gather participant insights on the effectiveness of the program structure, content, and delivery.
- *Evaluation Metrics:* Use measurable indicators, such as participant engagement, knowledge retention, and satisfaction levels, to assess the program's impact and identify areas for improvement.

Refine Future Offerings

- *Iterative Improvements:* Based on feedback from the pilot program, refine the syllabus, logistical arrangements, and participant selection process.
- *Scalability:* Explore opportunities to expand the program to include additional modules, increase participant numbers, and incorporate hybrid learning options for greater accessibility.
- *Long Term Engagement:* Establish an alumni network to maintain connections with program participants, providing them with access to mentorship, career opportunities, and continuous learning resources.

Program Marketing and Outreach

- *Communication Strategy:* Develop a robust marketing plan to promote the program through social media, academic networks, and industry conferences.
- *Regional Outreach:* Collaborate with universities, NGOs, and local governments in Southern Africa to raise awareness and encourage applications.
- *Success Stories:* Highlight testimonials and case studies from the pilot program to demonstrate the program's impact and attract future participants.

Create Evaluation and Reporting Mechanisms

- *Monitoring Tools:* Implement tools to track participant's progress during and after the program, such as surveys, interviews, and alumni engagement metrics.
- *Impact Assessment:* Measure the long term outcomes of the program, including participant's career advancements, entrepreneurial ventures, and contributions to sustainable blue economies.
- *Reporting Framework:* Develop a standardized reporting format to share findings with stakeholders, funders, and academic institutions, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Proposal for Intensive Training Course on Leadership Development for Sustainable Blue Economies in Southern Africa

1. Background

South Africa and other countries in Southern Africa are at the important juncture of the ocean as Agulhas Current flows southwestward along the east and south coasts, whereas the cold, wide and slow Benguela Current flows northwestward along the west coast. Sustainable blue economies are a critical policy goal aimed at promoting the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources while advancing sustainable development. Recognizing the need for leadership in this domain, the Nelson Mandela University (NMU), Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (CMR) and the South Africa International Maritime Institute (SAIMI) have taken a proactive role in fostering research and human resource development in marine resource management.

To further this mission, NMU, CMR and SAIMI, in collaboration with the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), propose an intensive leadership development training course. This course is designed to equip graduate students, young professionals, and undergraduate students with interdisciplinary knowledge and practical skills essential for designing business projects, mobilizing financial resources, managing organizations, and fostering partnerships within the sustainable blue economy sector.

2. Objectives

The proposed training course aims to:

- Develop leadership skills essential for advancing sustainable blue economies.
- Provide interdisciplinary knowledge and practical experience in marine resource management.
- Enhance participant's ability to design and implement business projects in the blue economy sector.
- Foster collaboration and partnerships among stakeholders in the marine resource domain.
- Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a full-fledged and regularized training program.
- Consider the designing of the mechanism to provide start-up support.

3. Proposed Activities

To achieve these objectives, the following activities will be undertaken:

- Curriculum Development: Design a comprehensive curriculum that includes core disciplines, relevant topics, and case studies on sustainable blue economies.
- Selection of Teaching Staff: Engage faculty members and practitioners from NMU, SAIMI, and affiliated networks to deliver lectures and mentorship sessions.

- **Training Program Implementation:** Conduct in house lectures, field visits, group projects, and presentations where participants propose hypothetical blue economy business models.
- **Regional Engagement:** Explore opportunities to involve teaching staff and participants from neighboring Southern African countries to enhance knowledge sharing and networking.
- **Logistical Coordination:** Arrange accommodations, transport, and resources necessary for participants and faculty members to ensure a smooth training experience.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Conduct post training surveys and assessments to evaluate outcomes, gather feedback, and provide recommendations for developing a full fledged leadership development program.

4. Expected Outcomes

The successful implementation of this training course is expected to:

- Enhance the leadership capacity of young professionals and students in sustainable blue economy management.
- Equip participants with practical skills to design, fund, and implement blue economy business projects.
- Strengthen partnerships among academic institutions, industry professionals, and policymakers in the blue economy sector.
- Provide valuable insights for the establishment of a regularized and comprehensive training program.
- Contribute to the long term sustainability and development of marine resource management practices in the region.

Modalities

By piloting this intensive training course, NMU, CMR, SAIMI, and SPF will play a pivotal role in developing the next generation of leaders in sustainable blue economies. This initiative will serve as a stepping stone toward a full-scale program that will drive sustainable marine resource management and economic development across Southern Africa and beyond.

Budget

It is ideal to develop a program that will allow NMU, CMR and SIAMI to engage other universities in South Africa and other Southern African countries. The provisionally estimated budget is herewith attach and it is still subject to further reviews. There is also an option to focus on the students in South Africa and/or at the NMU and its proximity without engaging off-campus faculty members and students as an initial phase and it may entail the budget in the smaller scale.

Suggested budget	Unit cost	No.	Days	USD Sub total
Staff cost				
Online campus faculty members	160	10	3	4 800
Off campus faculty members	160	5	3	2 400
Management and asministration				
Director	160	1	15	2 400
Researcher	130	2	15	3 900
Assistnat	90	2	15	2 700
Accomodations				
Off campus faculty members	150	5	4	3 000
Off campus students	100	5	7	3 500
Meals				
Lunch	25	50	5	6 250
Dinner	40	60	2	4 800
Transport				
Off campus faculty members and students	400	10	2	8 000
Field visit	300	1	1	300
Ground total				42 050

Note: When the scale of the engagement is reduced to South African national level or the Port Elizabeth local level, the size of the transportation cost and accomdation cost shall be reduced accordingly.

Conclusion

The discussions surrounding the establishment of a leadership development program for sustainable blue economies have laid a critical foundation for addressing pressing marine and coastal challenges in Southern Africa and beyond. By fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, innovation, and sustainable practices, the program promises to empower emerging leaders to navigate the complexities of ocean resource management, socio economic development, and environmental stewardship.

The proposed initiative aligns seamlessly with regional priorities and global frameworks, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and international blue economy strategies. By promoting interdisciplinary education, entrepreneurship, and collaborative problem solving, the program positions itself as a transformative platform for fostering leadership skills and driving impactful solutions within the blue economy. Participants will gain the tools and knowledge to address challenges such as overfishing, nutrient pollution, coastal resource degradation, and socio economic disparities. Additionally, the inclusion of fieldwork and practical modules ensures that the program's theoretical content is directly applicable to real world scenarios, bridging the gap between academia and practice.

This initiative also highlights the importance of inclusivity, equity, and accessibility in fostering sustainable development. By targeting participants with diverse backgrounds, including postgraduate students, early career professionals, and representatives from underrepresented communities, the program seeks to promote diversity and create a holistic learning environment. The emphasis on regional collaboration across countries such as South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola strengthens the program's impact by addressing shared challenges and encouraging cross border partnerships.

Furthermore, the program's focus on practical deliverables, such as the development of hypothetical business models, reflects its commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. These deliverables empower participants to apply their learning directly to their respective contexts, driving sustainable economic growth and community driven solutions. The establishment of mentorship networks ensures long term engagement, career development, and continuity of impact, addressing the common issue of skill retention and application within Africa.

Strategic partnerships with academic institutions, industry stakeholders, and international organizations are poised to provide the program with the necessary resources, expertise, and credibility to achieve its objectives. The proposed collaboration across sectors ensures that the program is well rounded, impactful, and capable of addressing multifaceted challenges in the blue economy. By leveraging local expertise, integrating indigenous knowledge systems, and aligning with global best practices, the program sets a precedent for sustainable development initiatives in marine and coastal contexts.

The leadership development program represents more than just a training initiative it strives to embody a commitment to innovation, sustainability, and socio economic growth. It serves as a catalyst for fostering transformative leadership, empowering participants to champion sustainable practices, and driving impactful change within their communities and beyond. By addressing critical gaps, embracing interdisciplinary approaches, and promoting regional collaboration, this program positions itself as a pivotal force in advancing the sustainable blue economy and contributing to global sustainability goals.

Ultimately, the success of this initiative depends on the continued commitment of stakeholders, effective implementation of its frameworks, and sustained engagement with participants and partners. Through collaboration, inclusivity, and innovation, the program has the potential to make a lasting impact on marine resource management, economic development, and the leadership landscape of Southern Africa and other regions. It is not merely a response to existing challenges but a proactive step toward building a resilient and thriving blue economy for generations to come.