



OCEAN CENTRES GHANA

PUTTING SAFETY AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABILITY

*Fostering a safe and sustainable
ocean economy in Ghana*

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FOREWORDS

It is a privilege to present this report produced through the Ocean Centres Ghana initiative, hosted by the UN Global Compact Network Ghana and supported by Lloyd's Register Foundation. This report makes an important contribution to the national conversation on how Ghana can advance a blue economy that is not only productive and inclusive, but also safe, resilient, and sustainable.

A central finding from the Ocean Centres Ghana process is that safety must be understood as a strategic development issue. It affects worker welfare, environmental protection, operational performance, institutional credibility, and the confidence of investors and development partners. It is therefore not a peripheral concern, nor one that can be left to a single institution or sector. A sustainable ocean economy requires systems that manage risk effectively, protect people, support responsible business practice, and strengthen long-term resilience.

Ocean Centres Ghana has created an important platform for this work. Through its launch, workshops, and wider stakeholder engagements, it has convened actors from government, industry, academia, labour, finance, civil society, and communities to examine shared challenges and identify practical responses. This multi-stakeholder approach is one of the initiative's key strengths. It recognizes that the risks and opportunities within the ocean economy are interconnected and that lasting progress depends on collaboration, shared ownership, and locally grounded solutions.

For the UN Global Compact Network Ghana, this initiative aligns closely with our wider commitment to responsible business, sustainability, partnership, and national impact. The report reinforces the principle that sustainability must be operationalized in ways that are practical, credible, and responsive to local realities. It also demonstrates the value of convening stakeholders around evidence and experience in order to strengthen both dialogue and implementation.

I commend all those who contributed to this process and trust that the report will be used to inform stronger policies, better institutional coordination, improved industry practice, more responsive training and research, and more deliberate integration of safety into financing and investment decisions. UN Global Compact Network Ghana remains committed to supporting this important agenda and to working with partners to help place safety at the centre of Ghana's blue economy future.



Tolu Kweku Lacroix
Executive Director
UN Global Compact
Network Ghana

FOREWORDS

Ghana's ocean economy offers significant opportunities for national development, employment, trade, food security and investment. The Ocean Centres Ghana process has shown, however, that these opportunities cannot be sustained without stronger safety systems, institutional preparedness and long-term resilience.

From inception in July 2025, Ocean Centres Ghana convened stakeholders through its launch, bilateral engagements and eight workshops covering shipping and ports, fishing and aquaculture, offshore renewables, and finance and investment. These engagements brought together government, industry, labour, academia, finance, civil society and community-linked actors to examine practical safety and sustainability challenges across Ghana's ocean space.

A clear message emerged: safety is not secondary to development. It is central to worker welfare, environmental protection, operational credibility and investor confidence. The report highlights recurring concerns around emergency preparedness, workforce competence, infrastructure readiness, incident reporting, regulatory coordination and financing for safety-critical systems. Many of these issues cut across sectors and therefore require coordinated, long-term responses.

The process also shows that Ghana has the institutional foundation, technical expertise and stakeholder commitment needed to act. What is required now is sustained coordination, disciplined implementation and continued investment in systems that place safety at the centre of ocean governance and operations.

It is my hope that this report will serve as a practical tool for policy reform, industry action, research and investment decisions. Its value lies not only in documenting stakeholder perspectives, but in supporting follow-through and embedding safety as a core condition for Ghana's blue economy development.



Nana Kwabena Boakye-Boampong
Country Lead
Ocean Centres Ghana

WHY PUT SAFETY AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABILITY

For Ghana, putting safety at the heart of sustainability means ensuring that ocean economy growth protects people, safeguards the marine environment and strengthens economic confidence. The Ocean Centres Ghana process showed that safety is not a narrow compliance issue. It is a condition for decent work, reliable operations, environmental protection, insurability, investment readiness and national competitiveness.

1. Safety makes sustainable growth possible. A sustainable ocean economy depends on the safety of ocean workers and coastal communities whose lives and livelihoods rely on it.

Socially, Ghana's ocean economy depends on seafarers, fishers, port workers, aquaculture operators, coastal communities, women in the fisheries value chain, regulators, trainers and

emergency responders. Their protection requires practical training, fit-for-purpose equipment, stronger welfare systems, reliable reporting, better enforcement and meaningful consultation.

2. Safe operations and resilient infrastructure protect people and help reduce environmental risks, supporting healthier ocean ecosystems.

Environmentally, safe operations are essential to sustainable ocean use. Poor maintenance, unsafe fishing practices, weak waste handling and limited emergency preparedness expose

both people and ecosystems to harm. As Ghana advances greener shipping, port modernization, offshore renewables and blue-food production, safety must be built in from the start.

3. A safer, more responsible ocean industry reduces risk, builds investor confidence, and helps unlock sustainable blue finance and long-term growth.

Economically, weak safety systems increase losses, downtime, insurance costs and investor

risk. Stronger safety governance can improve productivity, bankability and resilience.



THE OCEAN CENTRES INITIATIVE

The **Ocean Centres initiative** is hosted by the UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, and supported by Lloyd's Register Foundation, a global charity dedicated to engineering a safer world.

For the Ocean Centres initiative, safety and sustainability cannot be addressed separately. Safety is not only a matter of compliance or risk response; it is an enabling condition for sustainable development, climate resilience, investment and long-term prosperity. In this context, climate adaptation is also a safety strategy: by reducing exposure to hazards, strengthening resilience and enabling systems to cope with changing conditions, it helps prevent harm to people, infrastructure and communities. There is no blue economy without blue economy workers - fishers, port workers, seafarers - delivering their challenging jobs safely, supported by adequate standards, equipment and skills.

This safety-sustainability nexus is also increasingly relevant for unlocking finance and investment. As financial institutions, insurers and investors integrate operational, social, governance and reputational risks into their assessments, safety-related considerations are becoming more important within due diligence, ESG and investment decision-making processes.

Creating a **Safe and Sustainable Ocean Economy** is therefore not only a social imperative, but also an economic one. By helping stakeholders understand these interconnected risks and opportunities, the Ocean Centres seek to strengthen investor confidence, reduce barriers to finance and support investment in sustainable ocean development.

The Ocean Centres were set up in seven countries: Brazil, Ghana, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines. The programme focuses on four key Action Areas:



The Ocean Centres initiative was officially launched during the UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, on June 2025. Following the global launch, each participating country organised its own national launch and initiated a series of eight multi-stakeholder workshops, convening organisations from government, industry, the financial sector, academia, trade unions and civil society.

These dialogues were designed to identify and address the priorities, challenges, solutions, and opportunities shaping each country's transition towards a **Safe and Sustainable Ocean Economy**, including those related to climate change, the energy transition, emerging technologies and digitalisation.

This report forms part of a broader body of knowledge developed through the Ocean Centres initiative across the seven countries listed above. Together, the seven national reports

and the accompanying Global Report capture the key priorities, challenges, opportunities and recommendations emerging from locally led, multi-stakeholder engagement.

Each report was co-created through a series of in-person and online dialogues, reflecting the knowledge, experiences and perspectives voluntarily shared by participants in each country. Drafts were subsequently reviewed by Ocean Centres members and the respective National Safety Committee, whose feedback helped strengthen the accuracy, relevance and contextual grounding of the final report.

We invite readers to explore the full collection of reports and join us in advancing knowledge, partnerships and investment, implementing the recommendations, and working collaboratively towards safer and more sustainable ocean economies.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ghana's ocean economy can drive trade, jobs, food security, clean energy and investment – but only if safety is placed at its core. Through Ocean Centres Ghana, stakeholders identified practical priorities across shipping, fisheries, offshore renewables and blue finance. The report shows that stronger safety improves resilience, protects

people and ecosystems, reduces investment risks and enhances competitiveness. Ghana has the knowledge, institutions and partnerships to lead this transition. The priority now is to turn collaboration into action and build a safer, more resilient and investment-ready blue economy.

Ocean Centres Ghana by the Numbers

8 NATIONAL WORKSHOPS

24
hours

264
Individuals

Note: Under "Organizations by Sector", "Others" includes individuals who participated in the workshops without representing a specific organisation or sector.

Organisations by Sector

82 Government & Public Institutions

46 Private Sector

38 Civil Society, NGOs, and Multi-Stakeholder Platforms

35 Labour Unions & Professional / Sector Associations

29 Academia, Research, and Think Tanks

16 Others

11 Community, Indigenous, Women, or Youth-led Organisations

5 Finance & Investment

2 Intergovernmental and International Organisation

LAUNCH EVENT

6
Hours

51
Individuals

40
OFFICIAL MEMBERS

30
Organisations
10
Individuals

Three Things you Need to Know About Ocean Centres Ghana

1

In Ghana, the importance of safety is well known, but it is still not treated with sufficient consistency as the bedrock of credible blue growth, decent work, and investor confidence.

2

While the sectors differ in character, the same core safety gaps continue to recur across them: weak emergency readiness, limited data, uneven enforcement, skills shortages, and fragmented coordination.

3

Ghana already has many of the ingredients for progress, but they have yet to be brought together with the disciplined implementation, better financing, and stronger cross-sector ownership needed to turn potential into results.

Cross-cutting Findings from the Blue Safety Wheels Presented in “Outputs”



- 1** Fatigue and psychosocial strain; Competence and training gaps; Inadequate or unsuitable PPE and safety gear; Weak safety culture and supervision.
- 2** Weak emergency response and SAR readiness; Ageing or inadequate infrastructure, vessels and equipment; Poor communication, lighting and access control; Limited maintenance, monitoring and practical readiness.
- 3** Exposure to harsh weather and climate risks; Fire, spill, toxic exposure and hazardous waste risks; Weak controls over environmentally harmful practices; Threats to continuity of operations from climate and environmental pressures.
- 4** Fragmented institutional coordination; Uneven enforcement and compliance; Weak reporting, Inadequate data and feedback systems; Inadequate or underdeveloped sector-specific safety standards.
- 5** Underinvestment in safety-critical infrastructure and equipment; Limited finance and insurance for safety improvements; Weak safety readiness affecting bankability and investor confidence; Insufficient early de-risking support for emerging sectors.

Opportunities for a Safe Blue Growth

- Shipping:** Strengthen competence, training, drills, reporting and coordination to reduce accidents, improve emergency response and position Ghana as a regional leader in maritime safety and green shipping.
- Ports:** Modernize operations, traffic and contractor management, strengthen emergency preparedness, and invest in climate-resilient infrastructure to improve reliability and attract investment.
- Fishing:** Reduce fatalities and losses through stronger safety, incident reporting, emergency response, insurance and social protection; embed safety across the value chain, especially for women; modernize fleets and promote safer, sustainable local vessel construction.
- Aquaculture:** Enhance monitoring, equipment, supervision and professional skills to reduce losses, improve productivity and support climate-resilient blue food production.
- Offshore Renewables:** Build safety capacity, local skills and emergency-response systems from the outset to prevent delays, attract investment and support long-term sector growth.

Finance and Investment Implications of Safety Challenges

- Shipping:** Strengthen safety governance, competence and early investment to improve access to public, private and blended finance, enhance workforce confidence and reduce long-term transition costs.
- Ports:** Improve safety performance, governance and data to strengthen lender and insurer confidence, reduce investment risk and attract resilient infrastructure finance.
- Fishing:** Expand safety investment to protect lives, strengthen livelihoods, reduce downtime, improve resilience and support more insurable, investable fisheries.
- Aquaculture:** Strengthen safety, monitoring and reporting to reduce investment risk, improve productivity and performance, and attract long-term finance and technical support.
- Offshore Renewables:** Build robust HSES governance and credible safety assurance to reduce project risk, unlock grants, partnerships and blended finance, and attract early investment.

A CALL TO ACTION: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AT A GLANCE

The recommendations in this report highlight priority actions for businesses, government & regulators and the finance sector across the ocean industries covered in this report. They provide an at-a-glance overview for the business, government and finance sectors, while the complete set of recommendations is presented in the chapter A Call to Action: Recommendations by Action Area.



Business

- Treat safety and HSES as strategic value drivers, embedded in governance, board oversight and lifecycle risk management
- Invest in competence, safety culture, worker welfare, equipment, communications and emergency preparedness
- Use incident data to drive continuous improvement and embed safety across the value chain, especially for women and informal workers
- Strengthen Fisher Cooperatives
- Support innovation and link safety performance to competitiveness, insurability, access to finance and long-term business resilience



Government

- Embed safety across ocean governance, policy, procurement, infrastructure and project approvals
- Strengthen regulation, inspections, enforcement, inter-agency coordination, and national competence and emergency-readiness frameworks
- Develop integrated safety data, incident reporting and lessons-learned systems to support evidence-based decision-making
- Advance fisheries safety standards and ensure policies are shaped with fishers, women, coastal communities and other frontline workers



Finance

- Integrate safety into lending, insurance, due diligence, risk pricing and investment decisions
- Expand blended and de-risking finance for safety-critical infrastructure, vessel upgrades and emergency-response systems
- Strengthen financial-sector capacity to assess blue economy, climate and maritime safety risks, linking finance to credible HSES performance
- Promote inclusive finance by expanding affordable insurance and supporting women- and community-led safety investments

A full-page background image featuring a wind turbine on a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue, with a bright light source on the left creating a lens flare effect. The ocean is calm, and the wind turbine stands prominently in the foreground.

“ Safety is a precondition of all sustainable business practices, and the role of UN Global Compact is to provide business and governments with clear guidance on how to embrace safety in their sustainability journey ”

Erik Giercksky

Head, Ocean Stewardship Coalition
United Nations Global Compact

INTRODUCTION

About this Report

This report presents Ghana's Ocean Centres journey and its central message: Ghana's ocean economy will only be sustainable if safety is treated as a core development, governance and investment priority.

Drawing on stakeholder engagements and sector workshops, the report captures the practical realities facing shipping and ports, fishing and aquaculture, offshore renewables, and blue finance. It highlights where safety gaps affect lives, livelihoods, operations, regulation, environmental protection and investor confidence.

The report also identifies where Ghana can act, from stronger coordination and workforce readiness to better data, safety finance, emergency preparedness and sector-specific reforms. It provides a strategic basis for moving from dialogue to implementation, and for building a safer, more resilient and more credible ocean economy

Local Message for Partners & Nation:

For Ghana, this report reflects a shared commitment to place safety at the centre of the country's ocean economy future. It shows Ghana's capacity to shape its own ocean safety agenda through institutional experience, stakeholder knowledge and practical action.

It marks a shift from fragmented concerns to coordinated national action that protects lives and livelihoods, strengthens maritime and fisheries systems, supports emerging sectors and builds investor confidence.

Above all, it affirms that Ghana's ocean prosperity must rest on safer operations, stronger institutions, prepared workers and inclusive growth.

Who is this Report for?

The report is specifically tailored for a high-level audience of governments and policymakers to inform national regulations and international safety standards, while providing private sector leaders with actionable guidance on integrating maritime safety into their sustainability

operations. Additionally, it serves as a strategic resource for international investors and financial institutions to identify de-risked, "investable" opportunities in the blue economy, and assists international regulators in developing enforceable safety standards for the global maritime workforce.

1

This report is primarily for government and public institutions whose mandates shape Ghana's ocean economy, including relevant ministries, maritime and fisheries regulators, environmental and planning bodies, and other public agencies. It provides a cross-sector view of safety risks, governance gaps and institutional weaknesses that require stronger coordination and clearer implementation.

2

It is also intended for industry, finance, academia, labour, civil society, coastal communities, women and youth-led groups, and development partners. For industry, it links safety to performance, workforce readiness and competitiveness. For finance, it shows safety as a material factor in risk, bankability and investment confidence. For academia and research institutions, it highlights areas for evidence generation, curriculum reform, innovation and technical capacity-building.

3

More broadly, the report is a strategic reference for all actors working to advance safer blue growth in Ghana. Grounded in local realities and stakeholder experience, it also strengthens Ghana's voice in regional and international discussions on sustainable ocean development.



Our Two Priority Areas

Ghana prioritised **Shipping and Ports** and **Fishing and Aquaculture** because of their strategic importance to trade, livelihoods, food security and national development. The workshops were designed to deepen stakeholder engagement, address key safety and sustainability gaps, and identify practical actions to strengthen both sectors.



Ghana selected **Shipping and Ports** as its primary Action Area because the country's import-dependent economy relies heavily on efficient, secure and resilient ports. The sector is central to trade facilitation, revenue mobilisation, industrial growth and regional connectivity. Ghana also intends to leverage its maritime position to create employment by developing into a competitive seafarer supply nation. This ambition is particularly relevant as shipping transitions towards low- and zero-carbon fuels, digitalisation and new technologies. Strengthening training, certification, safety systems and port infrastructure will enable Ghanaian workers and businesses to participate meaningfully in the emerging green shipping economy.



Fishing and Aquaculture were prioritised because the sector provides livelihoods for a significant proportion of the population and supports extensive families and coastal communities. However, much of the artisanal fleet still depends on traditional dugout canoes, often operating with limited safety equipment, communications systems and emergency support. These conditions expose fishers to preventable accidents while placing additional pressure on marine resources and coastal ecosystems. Improving vessel standards, safety awareness, enforcement, data collection and sustainable fishing practices is therefore essential. A safer and more sustainable sector will protect lives, strengthen food security and preserve livelihoods for future generations.



BACKGROUND

Why does Ocean Centres Ghana exist?

Ocean Centres Ghana exists to close the gap between Ghana's ocean economy ambitions and the systems needed to make that growth safe, coordinated and investable. It responds to persistent gaps in governance, regulation, skills, infrastructure, enforcement, financing and

operational safety across shipping and ports, fisheries, offshore renewables and blue finance. By convening stakeholders around shared risks and practical solutions, it helps place safety at the foundation of Ghana's ocean economy future.

Why Locally Led?

challenges must be addressed within the country's own institutional, economic and operational realities. Local leadership ensures that priorities are shaped by those closest to the risks, and that solutions are practical, credible

and responsive to national needs. It strengthens ownership, supports institutional continuity and helps move the work beyond external prescriptions toward long-term implementation grounded in Ghana's context.

Why a multistakeholder collaborative platform?

Ocean Centres Ghana is designed as a multi-stakeholder platform because ocean safety, sustainability, productivity and investment readiness are interconnected and cannot be advanced through fragmented action. It brings the wider ocean economy community into a

shared space to identify risks, align priorities and develop practical solutions. This collaborative model strengthens ownership, improves coordination and supports reforms that are grounded in Ghana's realities and more likely to endure.

Why Long-term?

Ocean Centres Ghana is long-term because Ghana's ocean economy challenges are structural, interconnected and evolving. As technology, regulation, climate risks and financing conditions change, new safety issues will emerge alongside existing gaps in governance, skills, data

and enforcement. The Centre provides continuity to learn from experience, test solutions, adapt to new risks and move from diagnosis to implementation, embedding safety as a lasting foundation for ocean economy growth.

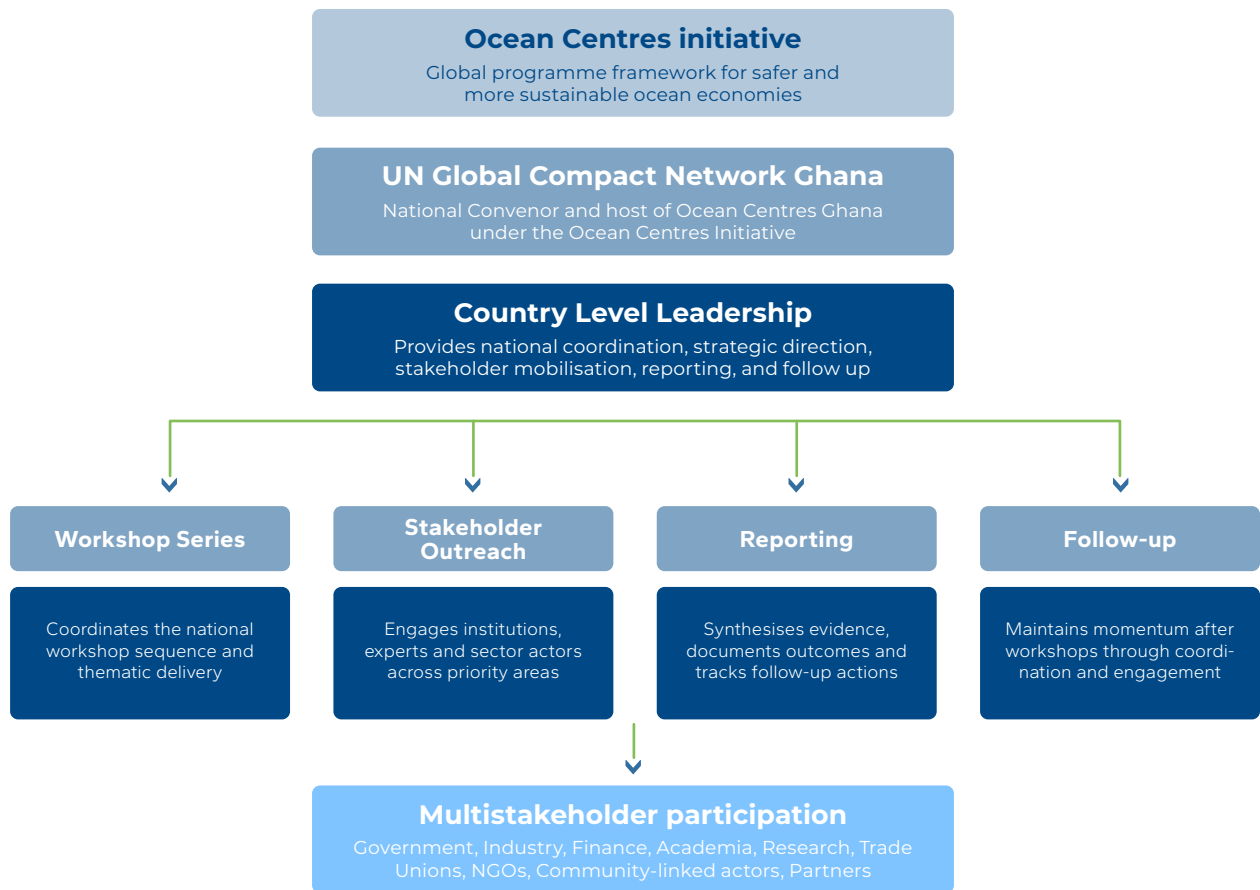


OCEAN CENTRES GHANA: JOURNEY TO DATE

Governance Structure

Ocean Centres operates through a collaborative governance model that combines global strategic coordination with country-level leadership, ensuring methodological consistency across the seven participating countries while empowering locally led implementation. In addition to supporting Ocean Centres with funding, Lloyd's Register Foundation facilitates access to relevant knowledge and networks.

The governance structure of Ocean Centres Ghana was designed to support coordinated stakeholder participation, practical implementation dialogue, and stronger alignment between safety, sustainability, operational realities and blue economy development priorities. It is organised as you can see below:



The Centre serves as more than a dialogue forum. It provides a structured space for identifying safety and sustainability challenges across the ocean economy and translating them into practical areas for reform. Its governance model brings together public institutions, regulators, industry, academia, labour, finance, civil society and community-linked actors, each contributing policy insight, operational experience, technical knowledge, worker perspectives, community realities and investment considerations.

This approach allowed issues across ports, shipping, fisheries, offshore renewables and blue finance to be examined together rather than in isolation.

By bringing regulators, operators and affected communities into the same process, the governance structure supported candid discussion, shared ownership and practical cross-sector learning. It also ensured that the Centre was not only engaging institutions, but drawing on their roles, responsibilities and capacities to support implementation and reform.

Capacity Building

Capacity in Ghana was built through practical workshops, bilateral engagements, webinars, technical reporting and wider Ocean Centres exchange. The process created a shared learning space focused on real operational risks, implementation constraints and practical reform options.

The launch and eight national workshops served as the main delivery platform. Their interactive and discussion-led format helped participants move beyond broad concerns to identify concrete safety and sustainability

challenges, test assumptions, share experience and develop responses suited to Ghana's institutional and operational context.

The process also strengthened safety literacy, stakeholder relationships and local ownership. Through country leadership, core partners and wider Ocean Centres support, global safety and sustainability concepts were translated into practical local action, creating a stronger basis for coordinated reform across Ghana's blue economy.

The Methodological Innovation

Ocean Centres Ghana used a practical, locally led methodology built on co-design, bottom-up engagement and cross-sector collaboration. Stakeholders were not limited to responding to pre-set themes; they helped define the priority safety and sustainability issues based on Ghana's operational realities.

The core approach was stakeholder-led diagnosis through interactive workshops, focused discussions and technical reporting. This created space to test assumptions, surface practical constraints, examine gaps between policy and practice, and identify solutions that are realistic within Ghana's institutional and operational context.

Safety was used as the entry point for wider discussions on sustainability, resilience, decent work, environmental protection and investment readiness. This helped reveal cross-cutting issues such as emergency preparedness gaps, weak data systems, uneven enforcement, skills shortages and fragmented coordination.

The process moved beyond dialogue by translating workshop evidence and recurring themes into clearer priorities and practical reform actions. It combined local ownership with wider Ocean Centres learning, creating a grounded, credible and action-focused model for safer blue economy development in Ghana.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement in Ghana was practical, targeted and relationship-based. It combined bilateral meetings, institutional outreach, workshop participation and sustained dialogue to build trust, surface sector-specific concerns and strengthen ownership of the Ocean Centres agenda.

Engagement with public institutions helped connect the Centre's work to national policy priorities on maritime governance, transport safety and ocean economy development. Discussions with industry brought frontline operational realities into focus, including emergency preparedness, workforce culture, maintenance discipline and readiness for greener, more technology-driven systems. Academic engagement reinforced the importance of training, simulation, research and competence development as core conditions for safety and future competitiveness.

Community-level engagement, particularly with fisheries stakeholders, grounded the process in lived operational realities. Issues such as the

absence of navigation lights on canoes, unsuitable life-saving appliances, physical strain from fishing operations and limited consultation in policy design showed that effective safety reform must be practical, context-sensitive and shaped with those directly affected.

The process also revealed opportunities for innovation, including safer small craft, improved communication and lighting systems, stronger landing-site safety arrangements, better use of local knowledge and practical support for small craft safety standards. Stakeholders also saw value in drawing on the wider Ocean Centres platform for technical insight, tested experience and adaptable solutions.

Overall, stakeholder engagement made the Ghana process more than consultative. It became an iterative process of dialogue, evidence gathering and solution testing, linking national policy discussions with operational realities and locally grounded reform options.



Workshops

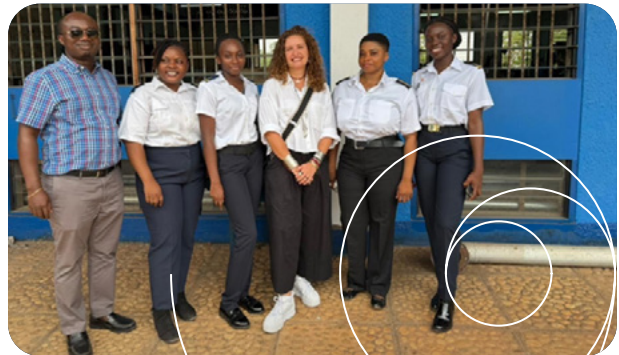
Ocean Centres Ghana developed issue-specific, problem-solving workshops tailored to Ghana's priority ocean safety and sustainability challenges. The series was designed to move beyond general dialogue and generate practical, locally grounded insights across ports and shipping, fisheries, offshore renewables, workforce development, and finance.

The opening workshop on Ports and Shipping Operations set the tone by examining how Ghana can pursue greener maritime operations without creating new safety risks. It connected decarbonization, digitalization, emergency readiness, workforce capability and investment, making clear that safe transition and commercial viability must move together.

The fisheries workshops addressed the sector from both governance and frontline perspectives. The session on Marine Capture Fisheries Regulation examined the legal, policy and



enforcement gaps affecting safety, sustainability and labour protection, while the workshop on Vessel Safety and Emergency Readiness focused on practical risks such as low lifejacket use, canoe overloading, weak distress communication, under-reporting and livelihood pressures. Together, they showed that fisheries reform must combine stronger regulation with workable, fisher-centred safety measures.

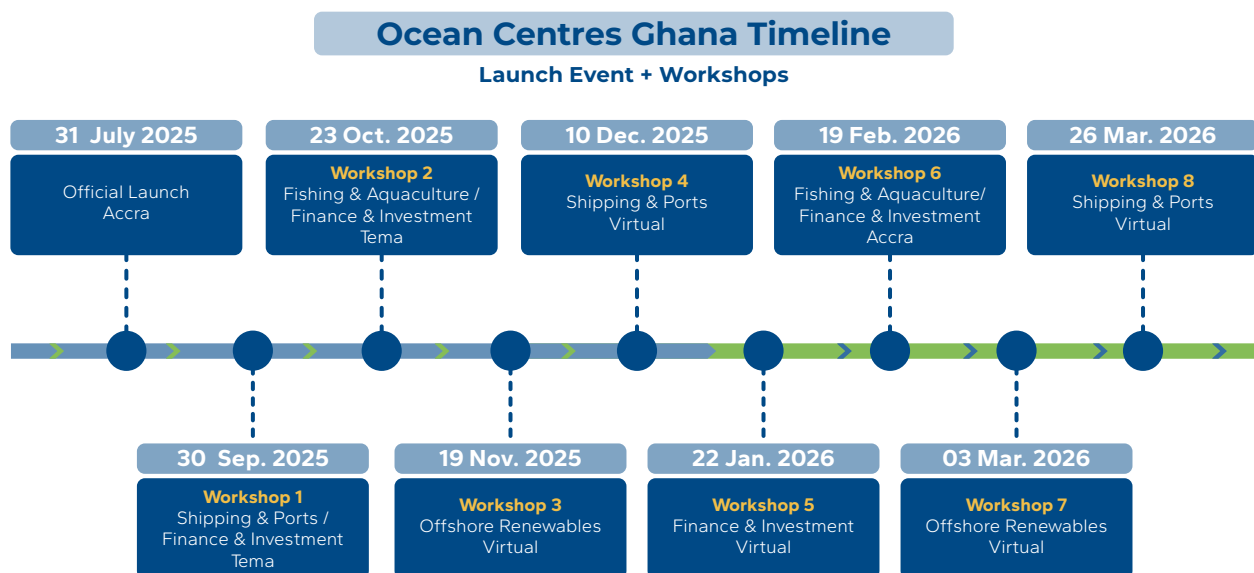


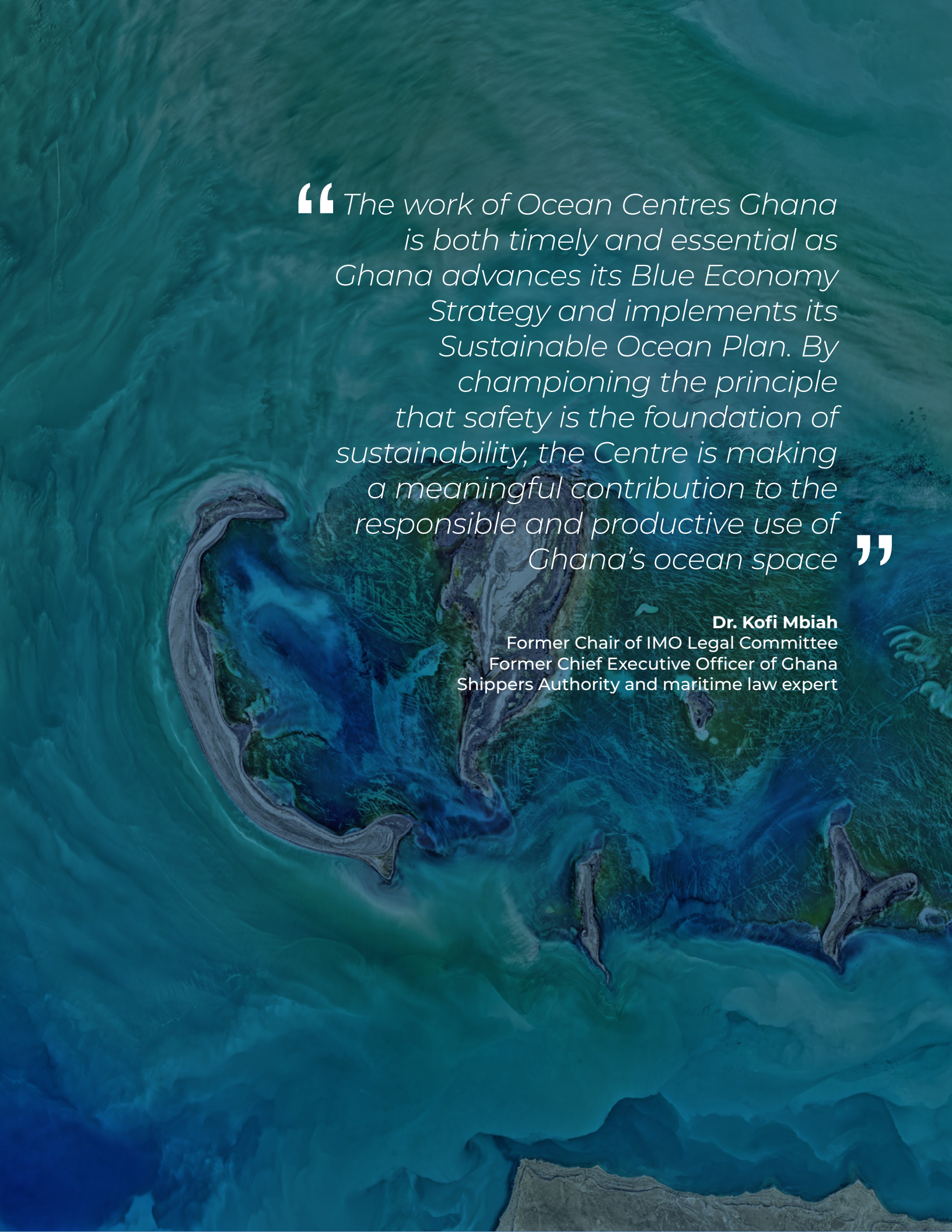
The offshore renewables workshops focused on readiness before scale. The first examined Ghana's preparedness for offshore wind, floating solar, tidal and related marine energy activities, while the second drew lessons from offshore oil and gas to inform future renewable operations. Both workshops stressed that clear rules, trained personnel, emergency response systems and local technical capacity must be built early if Ghana is to develop the sector safely and credibly.

The workforce-focused workshops highlighted people as the core of maritime safety. Discussions on seafarer education, recruitment, digitalization, automation, alternative fuels and the STCW review showed that Ghana's maritime competitiveness will depend on modern training systems, simulator capacity, instructor readiness, sea-time access and psychological safety. The finance workshop reinforced safety as an



investment issue, not only a compliance concern. It showed that weak safety governance, poor reporting and inadequate emergency systems can affect bankability, insurability and access to capital. Across the series, a consistent message emerged: Ghana's blue economy opportunities are significant, but they require stronger safety systems, prepared workers, credible regulation, reliable data and coordinated investment.





“The work of Ocean Centres Ghana is both timely and essential as Ghana advances its Blue Economy Strategy and implements its Sustainable Ocean Plan. By championing the principle that safety is the foundation of sustainability, the Centre is making a meaningful contribution to the responsible and productive use of Ghana’s ocean space”

Dr. Kofi Mbiah

Former Chair of IMO Legal Committee
Former Chief Executive Officer of Ghana
Shippers Authority and maritime law expert

OUTPUTS

Blue Safety Wheel

The Blue Safety Wheels translate the findings from the Ghana process into a structured view of the main safety challenges affecting five ocean industries: shipping, ports, fisheries, aquaculture, and offshore renewables. It groups the findings under five safety dimensions: worker safety, operational safety, environmental and climate-related safety, regulatory and governance gaps, and safety-related finance and investment constraints. This helps show where risks are sector-specific, where they recur across industries, and where coordinated interventions could deliver wider impact.



1: Fatigue, psychosocial strain, competence gaps for alternative fuels and digital systems, and limited sea-time exposure weaken seafarer readiness.

2: Emergency-response gaps, outdated training and simulator infrastructure and weak practical readiness undermine safer ship operations, aged fleet.

3: Alternative fuel operations, fire, toxic-exposure and maintenance-assurance risks, especially where equipment reliability is weak.

4: Fragmented coordination among the Agencies, METIs, recruiters and employers, with weak feedback loops from shipboard experience into training and oversight, lack of regulatory directives (secondary legislations). Inadequate technical competence at agencies and inadequate data for decision making.

5: Underinvestment in simulators, laboratories, trainer development and drills slows safety readiness and weakens Ghana's maritime competitiveness.





1: PPE inadequacy, poor management of high-risk zones, behavioral safety risks, weak visitor control.

2: Obsolete infrastructure, quay integrity issues, space constraints, poor traffic/ access control and weak EV or high-voltage readiness challenge safer port operations.

3: Greener port operations introduce heightened risks related to hazardous waste, spills, fire, and emissions, while climate exposure continues to threaten the resilience of critical port infrastructure.

4: Overlapping mandates, uneven enforcement, weak data systems and poor early-warning or reporting arrangements reduce regulatory effectiveness in ports. Communication gaps among agencies.

5: Safety deficits increase project risk, delay bankable green upgrades and limit finance for resilient infrastructure and specialized emergency systems.



1: High casualty exposure arising from low use of lifejackets and PPE, poor fitness-for-purpose of safety gear, fatigue, falls, man-overboard incidents, and strain-related injuries including hernia.

2: Overloaded and ageing canoes, unsafe loading and gear handling, weak distress communications, poor lighting and weak landing-site readiness increase operational risk. Lack of emergency procedures including first aid.

3: Weather exposure, unsafe trip decisions and harmful fishing and fuel practices heighten risks to both fishers and the marine environment.

4: No comprehensive small-scale fishing vessel safety framework, fragmented oversight, chronic under-reporting, weak enforcement and inadequate fisher consultation undermine compliance.

5: Limited insurance and finance for safety gear, communication equipment and response assets, combined with economic pressure, push operators toward unsafe choices.



1: Worker welfare, fatigue and supervision gaps across farms and support crews. Uneven safety culture and limited training for safer farm operations.

2: Weak maintenance, standardization and monitoring of farm systems.

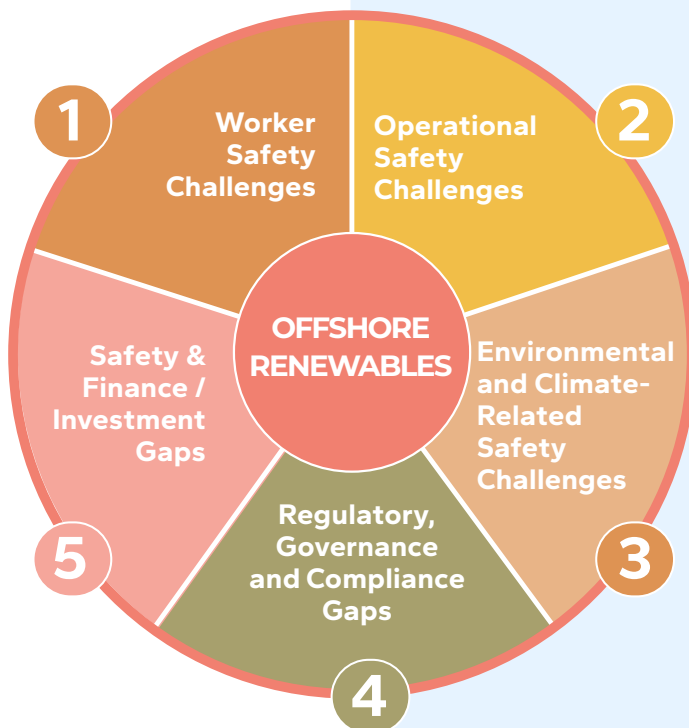
3: Support infrastructure for safer operations remains limited.

4: Water-quality and ecosystem risks from poor operational controls.

5: Climate and weather exposure affect farm safety and continuity.

6: Uneven regulatory coverage and underdeveloped standards for safer aquaculture. Limited data, oversight and institutional pathways for improvement.

7: Constrained investment in safer equipment, systems and monitoring.



1: Personnel transfer, work-at-height exposure, fatigue, harsh-weather access and weak stop-work culture create serious risks for offshore workers.

2: Port, logistics and access-readiness gaps, limited medevac and SAR capability, communication failures and SIMOPS conflicts weaken operational control offshore.

3: Harsh marine conditions, weather exposure, environmental-interface risks and cybersecurity vulnerabilities threaten people, assets and continuity.

4: Policy fragmentation, absence of a dedicated offshore renewables safety framework, weak drills, poor data-sharing and limited inter-agency coordination delay readiness.

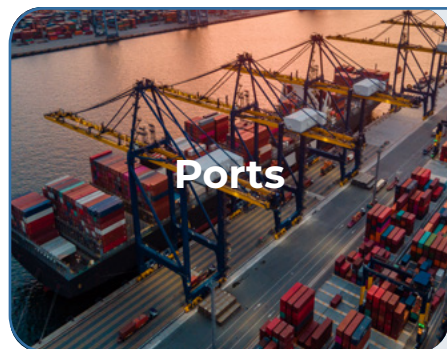
5: High perceived risk, limited local investment, weak blue-finance familiarity and insufficient early de-risking support constrain safety-critical offshore development.

Opportunities for a Safe Blue Growth

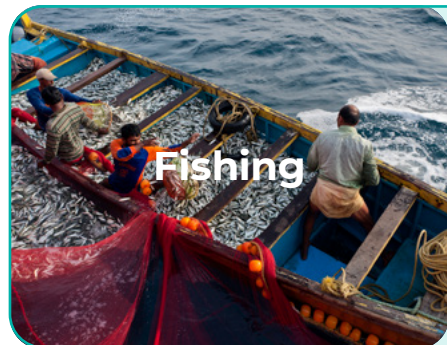
Under this section, the report identifies safety as a key enabler of Ghana's ocean economy growth. Stronger safety systems can reduce avoidable losses, improve operational reliability, protect livelihoods, strengthen investor confidence and support more bankable ocean projects. This makes safety central to building resilient growth and stronger ocean value chains.



- Upgrade simulators, instructors and practical training for modern ship operations.
- Align curricula, sea-time and competence standards with industry needs.
- Position safety and transition readiness as a competitiveness advantage for Ghana's shipping services.
- Prepare ships for the transition through risk assessments, safe bunkering procedures, fire response and pollution-control measures.
- Strengthen inspections, drills and reporting to demonstrate vessel readiness and regulatory compliance.



- Modernize port operations through safety-led upgrades that attract quality traffic and green investment.
- Integrate safety and security into port growth, decarbonization and emergency planning.
- Build climate-resilient infrastructure with safety embedded from the start.
- Use better data to guide maintenance, enforcement and investment.
- Strengthen traffic, access and contractor controls to reduce disruption and improve reliability.
- Smart port systems (VTMIS, IoT, AI); automation; cybersecurity upgrades; digital twins.



- Pilot practical canoe and industrial fishing safety measures relating to the vessel itself to reduce loss of life and downtime.
- Ratification and implementation of STCW-F, Cape Town Agreement, ILO C188.
- Improve vessel identification, communication and basic safety equipment for fishing craft.
- Support safer canoe materials and fit-for-purpose vessel designs.
- Link fisheries safety reform to worker welfare, insurance and social protection.



- Professionalize farm operations through safer equipment, training and monitoring.
- Improve farm planning, siting and oversight to reduce operational and environmental risks.
- Promote climate-resilient aquaculture models that support safer blue-food production.
- Strengthen quality assurance and welfare protections to improve market confidence.
- Attract targeted support for safer aquaculture systems and support services.

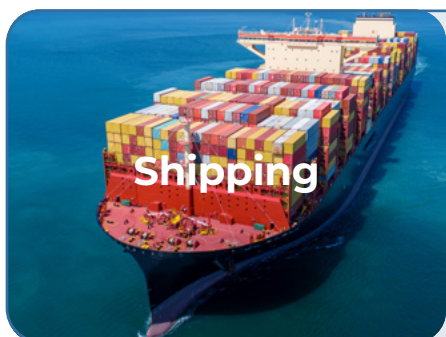


Offshore Renewables

- Promulgate regulations.
- Use weather support, digital tools and real-time monitoring to strengthen offshore resilience.
- Make safety assurance part of Ghana's offshore investment proposition from day one.
- Develop local service, training and emergency-response capabilities before the sector scales.
- Build a locally anchored offshore safety ecosystem to unlock partnerships, grants and blended finance.

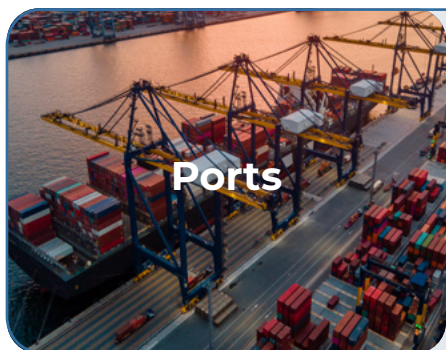
Finance and Investment Implications of Safety Challenges

Safety challenges across Ghana's ocean industries carry direct financial consequences. They increase operational risk, raise insurance and compliance costs, weaken investor confidence and reduce the bankability of modernization and climate-resilient projects. Strengthening safety systems is therefore not only a risk-management priority, but a practical route to improving investment readiness and unlocking private, blended and concessional finance for safer blue growth.



Shipping

- Stronger safety governance can reduce lifecycle losses, improve resilience and expand access to public, private and blended finance.
- Delayed investment in training, drills, equipment and maintenance can raise future compliance and transition costs.
- Alternative fuel risks, retrofitting liabilities and crew training gaps may increase insurance premiums and financing requirements.
- Poor maintenance and safety records can reduce vessel value and weaken owners' ability to finance fleet upgrades.
- Weak competence and assurance systems can reduce confidence in Ghanaian seafarers, shipping services and vessel safety.

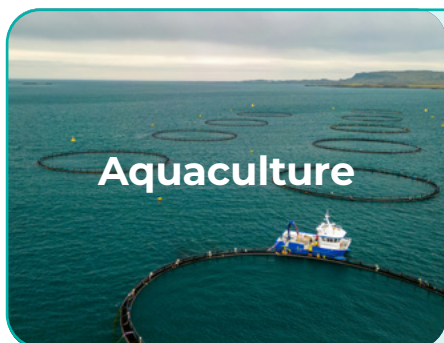


Ports

- High costs of infrastructure/automation and green port tech; competing national priorities limit public funding.
- Poor safety performance increases the cost and complexity of port modernization and green transition projects.
- Weak data and transparency reduce lender and insurer confidence in reported performance.
- Safer ports are more bankable, resilient and attractive to long-term investors.
- Inadequate infrastructure often leads to berth congestion, causing shipping lines to divert to more efficient competitors and resulting in lost port fees.



- Weak safety systems increase loss of life, vessel loss, injury costs and disruption across fisheries value chains.
- High mortality risks, unseaworthy vessels and lack of safety equipment can lead to very high insurance premiums or no coverage at all.
- Limited access to formal credit leaves many small-scale fishers reliant on high-interest informal loans, trapping them in debt and forcing below-market sales.
- Lack of vessel ownership and collateral further limits access to finance for safety-critical equipment and vessel improvements.
- Economic pressure and informality shift risks onto workers and communities, often masking the true cost of unsafe operations.
- Targeted finance for safety equipment, distress readiness and reporting systems is essential to protect livelihoods and strengthen value-chain resilience.



- Safety gaps increase perceived operational risk and can deter financing for sector expansion.
- Weak monitoring, reporting and governance make it harder to prove performance and access blended or concessional finance.
- Poor risk management can lead to recurring losses, lower productivity and weaker market confidence.



- Immature safety governance increases perceived risk and can weaken investor confidence in early-stage offshore projects.
- High CAPEX (Capital Expenditure) and perceived technology risks limit bank lending; need for blended finance and guarantees.
- Weak HSES readiness may push commercially viable projects outside investable thresholds.
- Early de-risking finance for standards, readiness and response capacity can unlock bankable offshore opportunities.



A CALL TO ACTION: RECOMMENDATIONS BY ACTION AREA

Based on the findings of this report, the following recommendations provide a practical roadmap for action across each Ocean Centres Action Area. While they emerged from a broad multi-stakeholder dialogue involving government, industry, the financial sector, academia, trade unions and civil society, they are primarily directed to businesses, governments and the finance sector, recognizing their capacity to shape policy, mobilize investment and drive implementation at scale. Their successful implementation, however, will depend on the continued collaboration of all sectors of society engaged in the Ocean Centres Initiative.

Across the Ocean Centres Ghana process, one message was clear: Ghana's ocean safety and sustainability challenges are well known, but implementation remains uneven. Gaps persist in emergency readiness, reporting, skills, infrastructure, enforcement, financing, and coordination.

Safety is therefore not only a protection issue. It is central to productivity, worker welfare, insurability, investment, and national competitiveness.

To support implementation, the recommendations are organized into two indicative time horizons according to their expected level of complexity, coordination and investment requirements. While some actions can be initiated immediately using existing capacities, others require longer-term planning, institutional strengthening and broader collaboration.

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (UP TO ONE YEAR)

Within one year, focus on measures that can be pursued through existing structures, including regulatory reviews, stronger safety procedures, better reporting, and targeted training.

MEDIUM- TO LONG-TERM ACTIONS (BEYOND ONE YEAR)

Beyond one year, address deeper reforms requiring policy change, institutional strengthening, infrastructure investment, expanded certification systems, and stronger conditions for Blue Finance.





Shipping and Ports

Short Term Recommendations

BUSINESS

- Update SOPs for high-risk operations, including alternative fuels, fire safety, cargo transfer, waste handling, and emergency response.
- Strengthen incident and near-miss reporting, with clear corrective action tracking.
- Conduct regular scenario-based drills involving crews, port workers, operators, and emergency responders.
- Tighten contractor management, traffic control, access control, and supervision in high-risk operational area.
- Use simple safety dashboards to track drills, near misses, equipment condition, corrective actions, and response readiness.
- Adopt AI-enabled protection systems and integrate ESG and cyber risk assessments into core governance and operational decision-making.

GOVERNMENT

- Introduce appropriate certification, quality assurance, and compliance systems for high-risk port and shipping operations.
- Strengthen monitoring and enforcement around hazardous operations, waste handling, access control, and contractor safety.
- Issue interim guidance on greener fuels, alternative energy systems, EV and high-voltage risks, and emergency coordination.
- Clarify institutional roles for port safety, shipping oversight, emergency response, and incident follow-up.
- Establish a standing coordination mechanism for port safety, emergency preparedness, green transition readiness, and inter-agency response.
- Conduct risk assessments & emergency drills at major ports; form national port resilience task force.

FINANCE

- Provide technical assistance for safety-case development, risk assessments, and implementation support.
- Use guarantees, concessional finance, or risk-sharing instruments to attract private capital into safety-led upgrades.
- Link financing terms to credible HSES improvement plans, milestone reporting, and measurable safety outcomes.
- Provide Public-Private Partnership (PPP) financing for terminal expansions and new breakwater infrastructure.
- Finance applied research, simulator upgrades, training systems, and emergency response capacity as core safety infrastructure for decarbonization readiness.

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Medium-Long Term Recommendations (cont.)

The priority is to Strengthen the systems, institutions, and infrastructure needed for safer, greener, and more resilient shipping and port operations.

BUSINESS

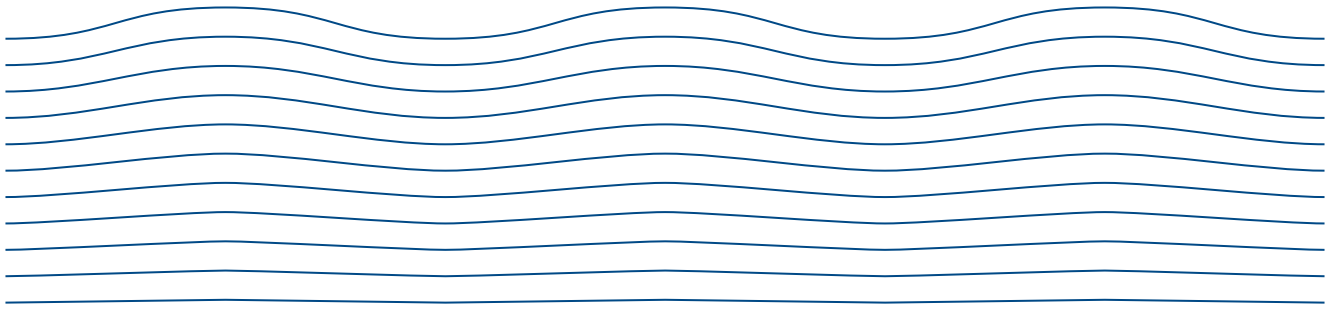
- Invest in modern simulation facilities, trainer development, and practical training pathways.
- Embed maintenance assurance and lifecycle safety management for alternative fuel systems.
- Improve sea-time pathway quality so certification reflects real competence.
- Establish stronger industry coordination on merchant navy training, cadet development, and workforce readiness.
- Integrate coastal community and fisheries interface issues into Net Zero Framework readiness.
- Shift from compliance-only thinking to a genuine safety culture across the organization.
- Adopt phased fuel transition, invest in fleet modernization & data monitoring systems.

GOVERNMENT

- Develop a coordinated national competence framework for safer and greener shipping.
- Modernize port and shipping regulations to address emerging technologies, alternative fuels, and new operating models.
- Institutionalize incident-learning systems between the maritime administration, METIs (Maritime Education Training Institute), employers, and training providers.
- Clarify roles among agencies responsible for port safety, shipping oversight, emergency response, and enforcement.
- Expand national response capacity for hazardous fuel incidents and high-consequence maritime events.
- Invest consistently in inspection systems, safety data, and technical oversight capacity.

FINANCE

- Scale blended finance for port resilience, specialized response systems, and clean transition infrastructure.
- Provide long-term finance for infrastructure that improves both safety and decarbonization.
- Integrate safety and sustainability performance into strategic lending and investment decisions.
- Build finance partnerships that treat safety as core competitiveness infrastructure.
- Strengthen domestic financial-sector capacity to assess maritime risk and safety-linked investments.
- Create financing pathways that reward verified safety improvements over time.





Fishing and Aquaculture

Short Term Recommendations

The priority is to reduce preventable harm now, while building the standards, systems, and financing needed for safer and more sustainable fisheries.

BUSINESS

- Adopt minimum vessel safety rules, including pre-departure checks, life-saving gear use, and basic communication protocols.
- Establish simple near-miss and incident reporting systems, with routine review and follow-up.
- Provide practical safety induction and refresher training for fishers, skippers, crew, and shore-based actors.
- Address fatigue, working hours, PPE compliance, and basic welfare as core operational safety issues.
- Pilot vessel identification, basic distress-readiness measures, and communication arrangements in selected fishing communities.
- Strengthen worker welfare arrangements, including medical support, accident reporting, and access to accident cover.
- Invest in robust vessels particularly for artisanal sector e.g solar-powered composite vessels.

GOVERNMENT

- Increase visible inspections and enforcement across industrial, semi-industrial, artisanal, and aquaculture operations.
- Develop interim safety protocols for canoe operations, while advancing a fuller small-craft or fisheries safety code.
- Work with fisher associations, local authorities, and landing-site committees to ensure safety rules are practical, locally tested, and supported by sensitization.
- Support local safety committees at landing sites and fishing harbours.
- Clarify agency roles and escalation pathways for accidents, rescue, casualty follow-up, and enforcement.
- Improve casualty investigation, publication of lessons learned, and use of evidence to guide prevention.
- Distribute life jackets, VHF radios, EPIRBs; develop mobile Basic Fisher Safety Training modules.
- Integrate fishers into national social protection schemes and register all artisanal workers in a centralized database.

FINANCE

- Support microfinance, leasing, group purchase, or cooperative models for life-saving, communication, and basic safety equipment.
- Explore pooled accident insurance for artisanal, small-scale, and aquaculture operators.
- Make safety performance part of eligibility for targeted finance, grants, or public support schemes.
- Support community-linked safety pilots through grants, blended finance, and concessional capital.

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Medium-Long Term Recommendations (cont.)

Establish a coherent fisheries safety framework backed by stronger regulation, improved vessel and landing-site conditions, better welfare protections, and sustainable financing.

BUSINESS

- Modernize fleets and promote safer vessel designs, including practical alternatives to unsafe traditional configurations where appropriate.
- Institutionalize fisheries safety data, casualty reporting, and lessons-learned systems.
- Embed structured safety management discipline within industrial and semi-industrial fishing operations.
- Strengthen labour protection, welfare systems, and accident support for fishers and crew.
- Build a long-term culture of safety partnership, accident learning, and community ownership.

GOVERNMENT

- Develop and implement a comprehensive canoe and small-scale fisheries safety framework.
- Establish permanent inter-agency coordination structures for fisheries safety and emergency readiness.
- Integrate safety into mainstream fisheries governance, licensing, enforcement, and sector planning.
- Strengthen legal support for non-punitive reporting, welfare protection, and hours-of-work controls.
- Resource inspections, first responders, and community-level prevention on a sustained basis.
- Strengthen maritime administration oversight of fishing vessel safety across all fleet segments.

FINANCE

- Establish long-term fisheries safety funds or insurance-backed support mechanisms.
- Scale inclusive insurance and social protection products tailored to fisheries risks.
- Use blended public-private finance to expand safety equipment, response assets, and training infrastructure.
- Link sector financing and public support to basic safety, reporting, and welfare performance.
- Support pilots that demonstrate scalable and bankable community safety interventions.
- Build local financial-sector understanding of fisheries safety as livelihood protection and resilience investment.





Offshore Renewables

Short Term Recommendations

The priority is to build readiness before scale, so that investment and sector growth are not weakened by safety, capacity, and governance gaps.

BUSINESS

- Use digital reporting tools, checklists, and communication protocols to reduce operational ambiguity and improve accountability.
- Conduct rapid readiness assessments covering access, transfer, medevac, weather support, emergency response, and logistics.
- Run tabletop and practical emergency exercises with ports, regulators, operators, and service providers.
- Launch targeted training on offshore project safety and grid integration.

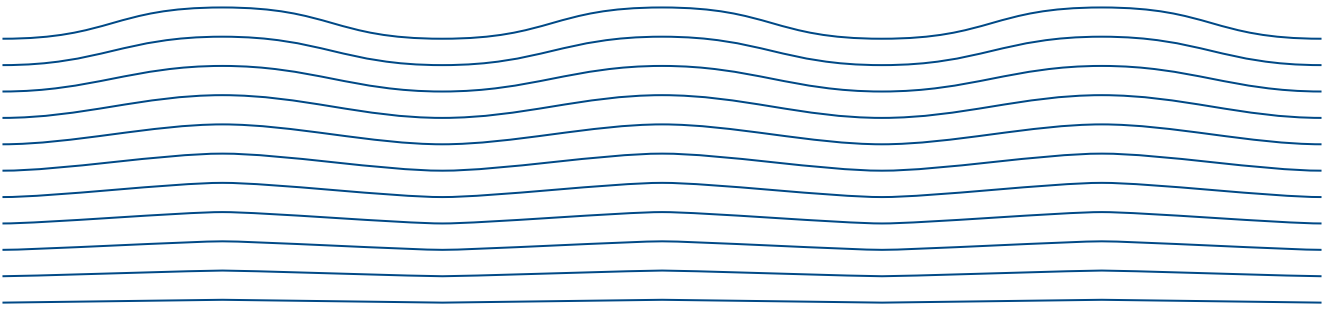
GOVERNMENT

- Develop interim national guidance on offshore worker safety, emergency drills, operational interfaces, and marine-space coordination.
- Clarify agency roles for offshore safety oversight, incident response, permitting, and emergency escalation.
- Initiate standards for offshore training pathways, drills, assurance expectations, and competence verification.
- Develop a national offshore safety readiness roadmap before sector expansion.
- Sequence the roadmap around what must be in place before project approval, before construction, and before commercial operations.
- Integrate relevant lessons from offshore oil and gas safety into renewable energy planning.

FINANCE

- Fund early technical assistance for safety cases, feasibility studies, risk assessments, and bankable project structures.
- Support feasibility-stage investment in safety-critical systems, data, monitoring, training, and emergency readiness.
- Promote concessional, blended, and de-risking instruments for early offshore renewable projects.
- Use risk-sharing instruments to reduce the cost of first-mover projects and crowd in private capital.
- Build capacity among domestic lenders and public agencies to assess offshore renewable project risks.

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Medium-Long Term Recommendations (cont.)

Over the medium to long term, Ghana should prepare for offshore renewables by building the rules, institutions, skills, safety systems and financing conditions needed before large-scale deployment begins. The priority should be to make offshore renewables investable, safe and locally beneficial.

BUSINESS

- Build domestic offshore safety capacity early, drawing lessons from Ghana's oil and gas experience before major offshore renewable projects begin.
- Develop local service providers in marine logistics, vessel support, lifting operations, inspection, maintenance, emergency response and offshore communications.
- Invest gradually in port readiness, weather monitoring, marine surveillance, transfer systems and offshore support services required for safe operations.
- Create practical training pathways for technicians, vessel crews, supervisors and emergency responders in offshore transfer, lifting, operations and maintenance, digital systems and safety procedures.
- Embed safety leadership into future project requirements, including clear expectations for contractors, subcontractors and local suppliers.
- Promote joint ventures and knowledge transfer arrangements that allow Ghanaian companies to participate meaningfully, not only as minor local partners.
- Use phased pilot projects to test local capability, emergency response systems, logistics arrangements and regulatory coordination before full commercial deployment.
- Partner with local authorities to build specialized training academies and "career hubs" to address the critical shortage of skilled marine technicians.

GOVERNMENT

- Develop a clear offshore renewables regulatory framework covering safety, licensing, marine operations, emergency response, environmental protection and assurance.
- Clarify institutional roles among maritime, energy, environmental, port, security and emergency response agencies to avoid regulatory overlap and delays.
- Establish national competence standards for offshore renewable operations, including certification for critical roles such as marine coordinators, technicians, vessel operators and emergency responders.
- Institutionalize regular offshore drills, search and rescue exercises, pollution response simulations and inter-agency coordination exercises.
- Integrate offshore renewable planning into marine spatial planning, maritime security, fisheries protection, coastal community engagement and small-vessel safety.
- Build a national offshore safety data system for incidents, near misses, weather risks, vessel movements, emergency response performance and lessons learned.
- Create an independent inspection and assurance mechanism to ensure that safety standards are enforced beyond paper compliance.
- Maintain policy continuity so investors, regulators and local businesses can plan with confidence across political and institutional cycles.
- Develop community benefit frameworks that ensure a portion of project revenue is reinvested into coastal communities and maritime infrastructure.

FINANCE

- Create phased financing models that support project preparation, safety readiness, infrastructure planning and local capacity development before full project construction.
- Use public-private partnerships, concessional finance and development finance support to reduce early-stage project risk.
- Promote risk-sharing instruments that reduce first-mover costs and attract credible developers with strong safety and local content records.
- Build the capacity of local banks and financial institutions to understand offshore renewable risks, including safety, weather, logistics, insurance and regulatory exposure.
- Link access to public support or concessional finance to strong safety, workforce development, environmental and local participation commitments.
- Position Ghana's offshore renewables sector as a credible investment opportunity by making safety governance, regulatory clarity and emergency readiness part of the national investment case.

Finance and Investment



Short Term Recommendations

The priority is to place safety at the centre of investment design, risk pricing, due diligence, and long-term value creation.

BUSINESS

- Launch training programs for banks and SMEs on blue finance instruments.
- Treat safety and HSES readiness as a front-end investment requirement, not a late-stage correction.
- Assign clear management responsibility for HSES performance, corrective actions, and reporting.
- Track safety performance throughout the project lifecycle, not only during due diligence.
- Strengthen workforce protection, psychological safety, grievance channels, and incident response systems.
- Replace informal safety practices with documented systems, evidence, and assurance processes.
- Use board oversight and internal audit to strengthen safety culture across financed operations.

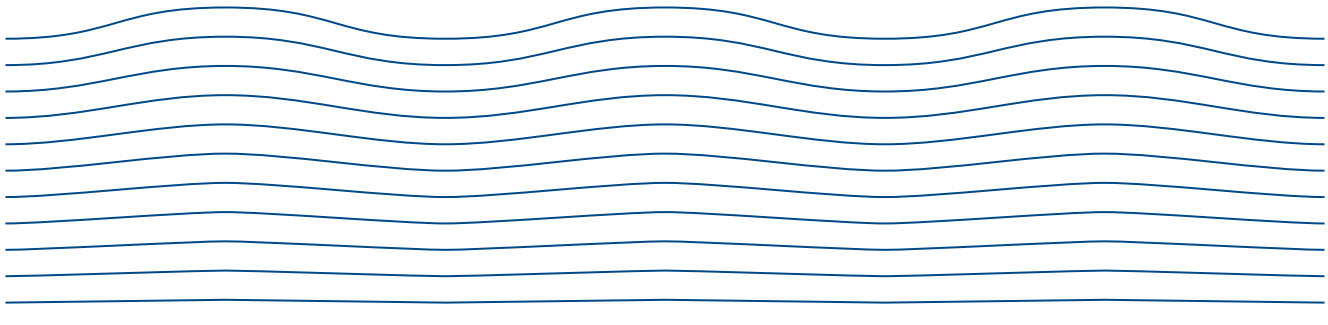
GOVERNMENT

- Develop internal bank guidelines for blue loan eligibility and fast-track processing.
- Embed safety requirements in public project screening, procurement, licensing, and approval processes.
- Promote shared guidance on good safety governance for blue economy projects.
- Improve public data systems to guide safer investment decisions and evidence-based policy.
- Align public project pipelines with international good practice on HSES, disclosure, and accountability.

FINANCE

- Create a national blue project pipeline and pre-feasibility study fund.
- Develop financing products that reward credible safety governance, reporting, and risk reduction.
- Use technical assistance facilities to help project sponsors close safety gaps before investment decisions.
- Expand concessional and blended finance for safety-critical infrastructure, equipment, training, and systems.
- Work with insurers to improve risk visibility, reduce information gaps, and support better pricing.
- Build a stronger local blue finance ecosystem that treats safety as a material investment and risk-management issue.
- Back pilots that show how stronger safety improves livelihoods, resilience, repayment confidence, and project viability.

Continue in next page



Medium-Long Term Recommendations (cont.)

Over the medium to long term, Ghana should make safety a core feature of blue economy finance by treating it as a driver of resilience, bankability and long-term value.

BUSINESS

- Make safety governance, worker protection and incident learning part of standard investment practice.
- Build HSES competence within investment teams and project sponsors.
- Move from one-off due diligence to lifecycle monitoring, verification and corrective action.
- Require project sponsors to demonstrate strong governance before capital raising.
- Include worker welfare, psychological safety and community risk in project assessment.
- Treat safety as a value-creation issue, not a compliance cost.

GOVERNMENT

- Integrate safety and HSES requirements into public investment and project-preparation systems.
- Develop common safety disclosure and due diligence expectations for ocean sectors.
- Strengthen public data systems to support better risk assessment.
- Create incentives for safer infrastructure, training and emergency response investment.
- Discourage informal or weak safety systems in projects seeking public support.
- Maintain policy continuity to protect credible long-term investments.

FINANCE

- Introduce blue finance tools that treat safety as risk reduction.
- Use blended finance to support safety upgrades that improve project viability.
- Work with insurers and development partners to reduce risk-pricing caused by poor data.
- Promote financial innovation for under-served sectors, especially fisheries safety.
- Introduce tax incentives for blue bond issuances and sustainability-linked investments.
- Build a stronger pipeline of bankable, safety-aligned blue economy projects.



CASE STUDIES

In this report, the Case Studies section adopts a forward-looking perspective by presenting stakeholder-developed initiatives with strong implementation and investment potential. Rather than documenting completed projects, it highlights concrete opportunities identified by national stakeholders to address practical safety, sustainability and resilience challenges across Ghana's priority ocean sectors.

Each initiative responds to a specific local need and, together, they demonstrate the breadth of solutions emerging across Ghana's ocean economy. Their implementation, however, will depend on securing the necessary financing, partnerships and policy support. By showcasing these initiatives at this stage, Ocean Centre Ghana seeks to catalyse the collaboration and investment needed to transform today's priorities into tomorrow's success stories.

1 CASE STUDY: Safe Work as a Pathway to Sustainable Blue Economy Development

The proposed project, led by the Regional Maritime University (Ocean Centre Ghana member) and the Institute of Applied Research, focuses on improving occupational health and safety across Ghana's ocean economy. It responds to persistent risks in fisheries, inland water transport and maritime operations, including weak safety culture, limited lifejacket

use, poor craft maintenance, overloading and inadequate emergency preparedness.

The project offers an opportunity to generate practical evidence, strengthen training and support safer working conditions for seafarers, fishers and inland-waterway users. Funding will be required to support research, field engagement, training, data collection and wider dissemination of lessons.

2 CASE STUDY: Solar-Powered Safe Craft and Fisheries Value Chain Transformation

This initiative proposes the design and deployment of safer solar-powered artisanal craft fitted with improved safety, communication, navigation and storage systems. It also links vessel modernization to cleaner fish processing, women's livelihoods, local boatbuilding, reduced fuel dependence and lower pressure on forests used for traditional canoe construction.

The project is important because it treats fisheries safety as part of a wider value-chain transformation. It can improve safety at sea, reduce operating costs, support women fish processors, reduce post-harvest losses and create new local skills in vessel construction and maintenance. Funding will be needed for vessel design, construction, solar systems, safety equipment, processing units, training and regulatory support.

3

CASE STUDY: Climate Resilience of African Seaports

The proposed AGNES-led project on strengthening the climate resilience of African seaports focuses on understanding climate risks and impacts at strategic ports, including Tema and Mombasa. For Ghana, this is highly relevant because Tema Port is central to trade, logistics, employment and national economic activity.

The project can help improve climate-risk data, support better port planning and strengthen decision-making for operators, regulators, policymakers and investors. It also responds to a key Ocean Centres Ghana finding: weak data and learning systems make it harder to identify risks early and prioritize investment. Funding will be required for risk assessments, stakeholder engagement, technical studies, decision-support tools and implementation planning.

4

CASE STUDY: Artisanal Fisheries Safety Data, Local Training Materials and Community Learning

This proposed initiative, led by the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council, seeks to improve casualty, incident and near-miss data collection in artisanal fisheries, while strengthening basic safety training for fishers in practical and culturally relevant ways. It responds directly to concerns raised through Ocean Centres Ghana engagements on weak reporting systems, limited safety data, poor emergency preparedness and the need for training that reflects the realities of fishing communities.

The initiative would support simple reporting tools at landing sites, basic safety training for artisanal fishers, and the translation of safety materials into local dialects. It would also document existing safety knowledge within fishing communities, including safety songs sung by fishers, and adapt them into training materials, radio messages and short safety videos. This approach recognizes that safety communication is more effective when it speaks the language, culture and lived experience of the people it seeks to protect.

The project can help build a stronger safety culture from the community level, improve evidence for policy and enforcement, and make training more accessible to fishers, canoe owners, fish processors and landing-site leaders. The initiative is currently seeking funding to support field data collection, translation, community engagement, audio-visual production, trainer support, reporting tools and dissemination through local media and landing-site networks.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1** Ocean Centres Ghana established a functioning national platform linking safety, sustainability and blue economy development.
- 2** A stronger cross-sector conversation has emerged between regulators, industry, labour, academia and finance around operational risk and reform priorities.
- 3** The process strengthened the case for better reporting systems, practical drills, training upgrades and clearer role allocation across institutions.
- 4** Ocean Centres Ghana has helped build a credible local platform for future pilots, partnerships and follow-through on safety reform.
- 5** Foundations have been laid for continued Ghanaian contribution to shared Ocean Centres safety literacy and implementation practice.
- 6** Safety has been repositioned as both a human protection issue and an economic enabler for investment and competitiveness.
- 7** A stronger cross-sector conversation has emerged between regulators, industry, labour, academia and finance around operational risk and reform priorities.
- 8** The Ocean Centres Ghana has established a stronger public and stakeholder presence, amplifying their impact and reinforcing their role as trusted platforms for advancing safe and sustainable ocean economies.
- 9** Foundations have been laid for shared global Safety Literacy Principles to guide safe and sustainable ocean economies.



CONCLUSIONS

Safety is the foundation for Ghana's ocean economy. It protects lives and livelihoods, supports reliable operations, strengthens environmental stewardship and improves investor confidence.

The Ocean Centres Ghana process shows that the main challenges are structural: weak emergency preparedness, limited incident data, skills gaps, infrastructure constraints, fragmented coordination and uneven enforcement. These issues cut across shipping, ports, fisheries, aquaculture, offshore renewables and finance, and require coordinated national action.

Ghana has the institutions, stakeholders, community knowledge and policy momentum to act. The next phase must focus on implementation: better data, stronger emergency readiness, improved workforce competence, clearer regulation, safer infrastructure and investment decisions that treat safety as a core value driver.

The priority now is to move from dialogue to delivery, and from shared concern to sustained action.

“The priority now is to move from dialogue to delivery, and from shared concern to sustained action.”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ocean Centres Ghana expresses its sincere appreciation and gratitude to all individuals, institutions and partners who contributed to this report and the wider Ocean Centres process in Ghana.

We are grateful to the fishers, seafarers, port workers, canoe owners, coastal communities, inland-waterway users and other ocean workers whose experiences and insights grounded this work in real sector needs.

We also appreciate the public institutions, regulators, industry actors, financial institutions, academia, labour unions, civil society organizations, women's groups, youth representatives, community leaders, moderators, panelists, speakers and facilitators who supported the workshops and engagements.

Our gratitude goes to Lloyd's Register Foundation for its support, and to the UN Global Compact Network Ghana for hosting Ocean Centres Ghana and providing the platform for this locally led initiative.

This report reflects a shared commitment to a safer, more inclusive, resilient and sustainable blue economy for Ghana.

Tolu Kwaku Lacroix

Executive Director

UN Global Compact Network Ghana

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Refer to [Annex II](#) to see the complete List of Contributors



TESTIMONIALS



"His Excellency President John Dramani Mahama is determined to develop Ghana's ocean economy more purposefully for the benefit of Ghanaians. Our ocean is a strategic national asset, and its development must advance jobs, livelihoods, resilience and sustainability. In this regard, Ocean Centres Ghana represents a timely and important contribution to our national journey toward a safer and more sustainable blue economy.

Its strength lies in bringing together government, finance, academia and industry around practical locally led collaboration in shipping and ports, fisheries and aquaculture, offshore renewables and blue finance. The government welcomes this effort and encourages its continued support, because lasting progress in the ocean economy will depend on sustained partnership and shared purpose."

Mrs. Joyce Bawah Mogtari

Presidential Adviser and Special Aide to the President of the Republic of Ghana; H.E John D Mahama

"The Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council recognizes Ocean Centres Ghana for its transformative impact on our sector over the past year. While discussions have historically centered on conservation, the Centre has successfully shifted the focus toward the human element of the blue economy: fisher safety.

Their work has not only raised critical awareness among artisanal fishers but has also fostered essential dialogue with key stakeholders, including the Navy and Marine Police. This inclusive approach is exactly what the industry needs. We are proud to partner with the Centre and remain committed to this collaboration, ensuring that safety and sustainability go hand-in-hand for the benefit of our coastal communities."



Nana Jojo Solomon

President, Ghana National Canoe Fisherman Council





"Ocean Centres Ghana is helping to grow Ghana's ocean economy by bringing people together and creating opportunities for investment and learning. It supports access to blue finance and builds knowledge across the sector, while improving safety, encouraging sustainable practices, and strengthening collaboration. I have learnt a lot through their workshops, which have been highly insightful and practical for our work in the industry."

Jerome Selorm Deamesi
Board Financial Secretary
Ghana Industrial Trawlers Association (GITA)

"Ocean Centres Ghana is a vital platform driving safety, innovation, and sustainability across Ghana's ocean economy. Its multi-stakeholder structure brings together an expert and diverse network of actors from various sectors, including academia, industry, and policy. This collaboration supports the co-creation of innovative approaches that inform practical solutions in critical sectors such as shipping and ports, fisheries and aquaculture, offshore renewables, and maritime finance."

Aligned with these goals, and with a strong focus on environmental stewardship and resilience in maritime operations, the Regional Maritime University, an institution dedicated to maritime education, training, research, and capacity development, is well positioned to contribute its expertise. Through participation in dialogues and workshops, RMU supports the Ocean Centre's mission to strengthen sector knowledge, stimulate innovation, and advance joint initiatives with meaningful regional impact.

Sustaining this collaboration remains essential. It promotes knowledge exchange, connects local expertise with international standards and best practices, and supports the integration of sustainable economic growth within Ghana's ocean economy and the wider region."



DR. JETHRO W. BROOKS- AG.
Vice Chancellor
Regional Maritime University, Accra, Ghana



"Ghana's Ocean Centres initiative represents more than a platform; it is a strategic convergence point where safety, sustainability, and collaboration are operationalized across the maritime sector, creating the institutional coherence needed to unlock a resilient and globally competitive ocean economy."

Dr. Godfred Sowah Khartey
Founder & Consulting Executive Director
Centre for Environmental Sustainability, Marine and Maritime Affairs
(CESMMA Global)



"The work of Ocean Centres Ghana is both timely and essential as Ghana advances its Blue Economy Strategy and implements its Sustainable Ocean Plan. By championing the principle that safety is the foundation of sustainability, the Centre is making a meaningful contribution to the responsible and productive use of Ghana's ocean space and creating pathways for the realization of Ghana's Blue Economy strategic goals. Through constructive engagement across ports and shipping, fisheries and aquaculture, offshore renewable energy, and blue finance, it is strengthening a coordinated, inclusive, and forward-looking framework for maritime governance, workforce preparedness, and investment. With continued collaboration among stakeholders, Ocean Centres Ghana is positioned to play a leading role in advancing safer, inclusive, more resilient, and sustainable ocean industries in Ghana".

Dr. Kofi Mbiah

Former Chair of IMO Legal Committee

Former Chief Executive Officer of Ghana Shippers Authority and maritime law expert

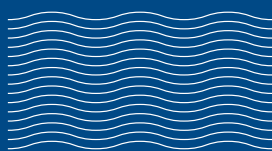


ANNEXES

To ensure that the main report remains concise and accessible, these Annexes provide supplementary information and supporting materials for readers wishing to explore specific topics in greater depth

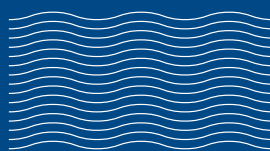
Annex I:

Ocean Centres
Ghana - Photo
Gallery



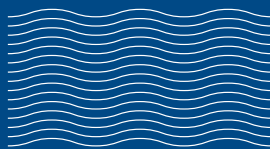
Annex II:

List of
Contributors



Annex III:

Official Members





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