

WSDS 2020

**Blue Economy for Agenda 2030:
Aligning Economic Development
for Sustainable Development of Oceans**

31 January, 15:00 - 15:15, Stein Audi

Distinguished guests, fellow panelists, ladies and gentlemen!

It is my pleasure to attend this plenary session on Blue Economy for Agenda 2030. The oceans and blue economy is a topic very dear to every Norwegian.

Our nation is depending on the ocean. Our coastline is one of the longest in the world, and the marine areas we manage are more than five times as large as the land areas.

Oceans storehouse of resources

Norwegian ocean industries – seafood, maritime transportation, offshore energy - as well as newer ocean industries - are the backbone of the Norwegian economy and has been for a thousand years. Every day hundreds of

thousands of Norwegians go to work in the ocean industries, which together account for about 70 per cent of Norway's export earnings.

Looking towards 2050, Norway's income from the ocean may be over 40 percent higher than in 2010, according to recent estimates.

The potential is huge, as the ocean itself.

Our oceans are under threat

- Globally, about 30 % of all fish stocks are overfished and about 60 % are fully exploited.
- Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing costs 23 billion dollars pr. Year in lost income.
- Poor management reduces the value of global marine fisheries by 50 billion dollars per year.
- Acidification and warming seas are causing widespread death of coral reefs.
- The Ocean is on course to contain an estimated 1 kg of plastic for every 3 kg of fish within 10 years.

There is therefore an urgent need for action.

Realizing the urgency, in 2017, the Norwegian Government published a first ever Ocean Strategy document, and a White Paper on the role of the ocean in the Norwegian foreign and development policy.

Later on, in 2018, our Prime Minister Ms Erna Solberg established a **High Level Panel for Building a Sustainable Ocean Economy** gathering 14 Heads of State and Government. The intention behind this initiative is to increase international awareness of the fact that **sustainable use of the oceans can enable us to meet some of the world's most vital needs** in the years to come.

As a further follow up, the Government of Norway organized **Our Oceans conference in October 2019**, in Oslo. The Conference highlighted the **importance of knowledge as the basis of our actions**.

The Conference witnessed a **shift in emphasis from commitments to action** and identified 374 new commitments, totaling at least 63 billion

dollars in the areas of climate change, pollution and fisheries governance.

We need to make healthy oceans a global priority.

In our ocean strategies we need to include both national and global elements. It should contain green technology, digitalization, innovative uses of marine resources, international diplomacy, and the fight against illegal fishing and plastic pollution.

We need to pursue **integrated, ecosystem-based management of our sea areas** . We need to combine ocean-based industries with a healthy marine environment. Science-based integrated management was the main theme of the Our Ocean Conference in Oslo.

In developing a sustainable ocean economy, **we must implement green solutions for the future.**

The maritime industry will have to direct its investments at low- and zero emission shipping.

We need to develop well managed sustainable fisheries.

In order to create wealth, we need to understand much more on the oceans. We will have to **invest more in research and collaborate with each other** in this endeavor.

Cooperation and synergies between ocean industries will be a new competitive edge.

5. Global commitment and cooperation

To solve ocean-related problems good cooperation mechanisms are needed at both global and regional level.

Norway has expertise and experience in this field, and we are strengthening development cooperation in the area of sustainable ocean management by establishing the Oceans for Development programme.

We are pleased to note that the Indian government is highly committed to solving the global challenges that we all face in the ocean space. We commend India for engaging in

international dialogue on key issues. And, not least, for launching several important national initiatives aimed at developing the blue economy in a sustainable manner.

Norway is a proud partner with India in these endeavours:

During our Prime Minister Erna Solberg's visit to India in January 2019 a Norway India Ocean Dialogue was established. We have an inter-ministerial Task Force on Blue Economy and we launched an India Norway Marine Pollution Initiative. The objective is to identify areas of strategic collaboration and developing joint initiatives on a more operational level.

Friends, I conclude by sharing my firm belief that the oceans hold the key to solving many of the most challenging tasks facing the world today - Eradicating hunger and extreme poverty by 2030, Combating climate change, Creating jobs in both developed and developing countries, Ensuring affordable and clean energy for all and Even securing peace and stability.
