



## IORA UPDATE

According to the United Nations, more than 40% of the world population lives near the coast. Additionally, most of the world's major cities are also situated along the coast or estuaries. This coastal aggregation of the human population makes the marine environment one of the most important resources of the planet. The "Blue Economy", is a new innovative concept which links the economy of a country with the sustainable management and utilization of its natural resources. This new concept encompasses the "Green Economy" as well as the "Ocean Economy" and aims to merge the environment and sustainability by ensuring the best possible ways to provide basic human needs.

The Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and the Durban University of Technology (DUT) of the Republic of South Africa in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) will host a two-day workshop on "Promoting Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security Cooperation in the Indian Ocean" on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015 in Durban, South Africa. This first IORA workshop on the Blue Economy would bring together officials from IORA Member States, as well as Dialogue Partners in a forum to pursue discussion on the importance of Fisheries & Aquaculture, as well as Maritime Safety & Security in the Indian Ocean region. Furthermore, this two-day event will also aim at promoting the establishment of an IORA Blue Economy Core Group for the Fisheries & Aquaculture sector which is one of the major components of the Blue Economy.

IORA Member States, strongly believe that there is an urgent need to promote the different sectors of the Blue Economy for the proper management of resources of the Indian Ocean. Moreover, IORA Member States also believe that efficient information and knowledge sharing among Member countries would also greatly enhance the management of the Indian Ocean region resources.

The present workshop would focus on two main topics namely, Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security. Discussion themes would include existing countries experiences including best practices, existing capacity building, regional networking as well as collaborative researches in Fisheries & Aquaculture and Maritime Safety & Security. The rising importance of technology transfer in the both above-mentioned sectors would also be highlighted during the course of this workshop. Additionally, this Blue Economy Core Group workshop would also aim to brief IORA Member States on the main IORA Blue Economy event entitled "The First IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference" scheduled to take place in early September 2015 in the Republic of Mauritius. The Deputy Minister of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the Chief Executive Officer of the Human Science Research Center (HSRC) and the Vice-Chancellor of the Durban University of Technology (DUT) would inaugurate the workshop.

The Blue Economy has now gained much interest for multiple IORA Member States and with an increased maritime activity in the Indian Ocean region predicted in the future, the IORA strongly believe that this workshop will be a major asset for pioneering the Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, the IORA also believe that this workshop would also enhance IORA Member States experiences and capacities in the Fisheries & Aquaculture sector.

29 April 2015