



BLUE CAREERS AND BUSINESS EXPO 2021

BUILDING A ROBUST BLUE ECONOMY, LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND



EVENT REPORT

November 9 & 10, 2021



BACKGROUND

The Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute's (GoGMI) flagship webinar on the topic, *Gender Mainstreaming in Ghana's Maritime Sector*, held on 27th November 2020, highlighted an urgent need to create a strategic platform to actively engage African youth in driving innovative solutions to advancing the continent's blue economy and to expose them to the myriad of career opportunities available in the maritime sector.

In response to this, the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute organised the maiden edition of the Blue Careers and Business Expo under the theme, *Building a Robust Blue Economy, Leaving No One Behind*, in collaboration with the Women in Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA Ghana). The two-day event created multi-opportunity exchange platforms for young people to interact with maritime industry leaders across the country. The event was also used to initiate a mentorship program to be co-managed by GoGMI to foster career development among the participants of the conference.

The event was sponsored by the Canadian High Commission to Ghana and the Support for West African Integrated Maritime, with support from Consolidated Shipping Ghana Ltd.

OVERVIEW OF THE EVENT

Hosted at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping and Training Centre, the Expo was attended by over 200 people, including high profile personalities, maritime industry practitioners, students and other relevant stakeholders. Present were Her Excellency Kati Csaba - High Commissioner of Canada to Ghana, Rear Admiral Issah Yakubu - Chief of Naval Staff, Ghana Navy, Hon. Kathleen Quartey Ayensu - Special Rapporteur for Piracy and Maritime Security for the AU Commission, and Mr. Tukur Mohammed - Maritime Security and Safety Programme Officer of the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), who joined the meeting virtually.





Exhibitors from the maritime industry mounted stands to introduce participants to varying opportunities within Ghana's blue economy and to showcase their innovative products, services and maritime solutions. These included Consolidated Shipping Agency Ltd, SIC Life Company Limited, Plastic Punch, Centrepont Supply Chain Solutions Limited, Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, WISTA Ghana, SOKO Aerial Robotics, Odomankoma Maritime News Agency, Regional Maritime University (RMU) and the Ghana Navy.

EVENT PROCEEDINGS

Opening Session

The conference was initiated by a series of addresses and goodwill messages from the special guests and dignitaries, who underscored their unflinching support to GoGMI and WISTA for their contributions towards enhancing an "all-inclusive" blue economy trajectory in Ghana.



H.E. Kati
Csaba,
Canadian High
Commissioner
to Ghana

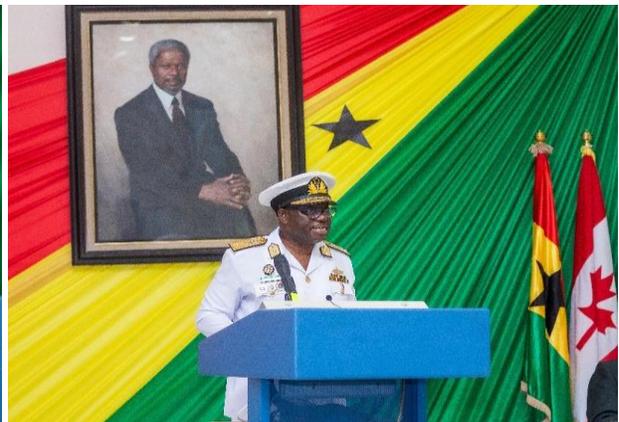
*Guest of
Honour*

Messages delivered during the opening session highlighted the following:

- Ghana's maritime industry is faced with vulnerabilities resulting from a range of maritime security threats, including the surge in piracy attacks in the Gulf of Guinea. Efforts must be harnessed towards promoting maritime security in Ghana.
- Youth must prime themselves to take up roles within blue economy sectors. Likewise, recruiters within the maritime industry must put in deliberate efforts to attract the best.



- Women, who continually remain underrepresented in the maritime sector, must be supported to pursue careers traditionally dominated by men, including defense, science, technology and engineering.
- The African Union supports the development of inclusive blue economies in Africa as stipulated in AGENDA 2063 and the African Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050, which includes directives for each member state to:
 - Develop a National Maritime Plan within three years
 - Build up minimum 20% - 30% female capacity all round in blue economy for the next fifteen years
 - Include female youth in the dialogue and outreach of related educational programmes (STEM, BUSINESS, and MARITIME).
- Deliberate efforts must be made at all levels to guard against sea-blindness and move from that towards a healthy obsession with Ghana's blue economy potential.
- National policy-makers must develop a comprehensive maritime policy that places the blue economy at the heart of the national agenda.





Exhibition

The opening session of the event concluded with an exhibition tour which allowed participants to interact and engage fully with exhibitors who took turns to explain their role in Ghana's blue economy.



Panel Discussions and Presentations

A series of panel discussions (P.D.) interspersed with presentations on pertinent issues in different maritime sectors were featured in the activities of the event. The first day's presentation, made by Dr. Alberta Sagoe on *Blue Economy Opportunities for Youth in Ghana*, threw light on the concept of blue economy, 'blue' ecosystem services which support various economic sectors in Ghana and urged all stakeholders to participate fully in adopting integrated approaches in developing a robust blue economy in Ghana.

The second day's presentation which focused on *SWAIMS and Gender in the Maritime Space* was delivered by Mdm. Emike Aken'Ova, who explained the challenges in the maritime space and the role of women in curbing the menace. She recommended that women should be equally equipped to participate actively in initiatives aimed at reducing piracy attacks in the Gulf of Guinea maritime space.

P.D. 1

Topic Academia – Identifying Innovative Approaches to Training and Multisectoral Cooperation in the Maritime Sector

<i>Moderator</i>	Dr. Rahmat Quagraine Duker	Lecturer, University of Environment and Sustainable Development
<i>Panelists</i>	Dr. John York Abaidoo	Dean of Graduate School, Regional Maritime University, Ghana
	Dr. Margaret Akwetey	Lecturer, University of Cape Coast
	Cdre Maxwell Arhen	Flag Officer Commanding, Naval Training Command, Ghana Navy



Primary Issues Raised

- Programmes offered at tertiary institutions that are of relevance to the maritime industry, as well as career opportunities resulting from pursuing such programmes.
- The quality of maritime related research programmes offered within tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

- Measures should be put in place to enhance the quality of training delivered through maritime-related research programmes offered within Ghana's tertiary institutions.
- Internship programmes and other opportunities for hands-on training should be integrated into tertiary curricula.
- Education and training should equip students to identify the broad range of opportunities within specific maritime sectors. For instance, the fisheries sector offers a number of varying opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, right from capture to plate.

P.D. 2

Topic **Maritime Research and Consultancy – Addressing Barriers to Youth Engagements in Ghana's Blue Economy**

<i>Moderator</i>	Mr. Jeffrey Botchway	CEO, Masser Afrique
<i>Panelists</i>	Dr. Kamal-Deen Ali	Executive Director, CEMLAWS Africa
	Dr. Alberta Sagoe	Executive Director, GoGMI
	Dr. George VanDyck	Senior Lecturer, Maritime Transport Department, Regional Maritime University, Ghana
	Dr. Angela Lamptey	Lecturer, Department of Marine and Fisheries Sciences, University of Ghana



Primary Issues Raised

- Viable pathways towards engaging Ghanaian youth in maritime research and consultancy.
- The role of mentorship in addressing barriers to the engagement of Ghanaian youth in research and mentorship.
- National-level approaches to sensitize citizens on the value of the blue economy.

Recommendations

- There is the need to actively engage Ghanaian youth in mentorship programmes within the maritime sector. While consultancy is an amazing career opportunity within the maritime industry, it requires years of experience and mentorship, each of which are seldom available to Ghanaian youth.
- Ghanaian youth should be introduced to fisheries and other ocean sciences as viable career paths, with parents offering full support to their wards who wish to pursue careers in these areas.
- The blue economy consists of a long chain of careers and job roles. Each of these must be systematically highlighted within the Ghanaian educational policy space. More specifically, there is the need for a national agenda which sensitizes citizens on the existence and value of Ghana's blue and coastal economy.

P.D. 3

Topic Fisheries and Maritime Tourism – Prioritising Local and Indigenous Knowledge for Capacity Development

<i>Moderator</i>	Dr. Michelle Clotley	Lecturer, University of Cape Coast
<i>Panelists</i>	Mr. Daniel Owusu	Coordinating Secretary, National Fisheries Association of Ghana (NAFAG)



Mr. Michael Obeng Konadu	Regional Director, Coastal Development Authority (CODA)
Mr. Emmanuel Tetteh Apeku	Business Development Lead, PROFISH Ghana Limited



Primary Issues Raised

- Approaches to creating a shift from derogatory perspectives of fisheries career paths
- Approaches to engaging Ghanaian youth in the sustainable exploitation of fish stock and other lucrative activities along the fisheries value chain
- The role of maritime tourism in the advancement of Ghana's economy

Recommendations

- More events like the BCBE are critical to causing attitudinal and mindset shifts in perspectives surrounding fisheries and maritime tourism as career paths. Such shifts are a crucial first step to ensuring that the exploitation of Ghana's fisheries resources is not left in the hands of foreigners, but is conducted in a sustainable manner for the benefit of Ghanaian citizens in general and coastal communities in particular.
- There is paucity in monitoring, control and surveillance of Ghana's maritime domain for the advancement of sustainable fisheries and maritime tourism. More youth need to be trained to fill the gap and to drive innovative solutions to problems arising.

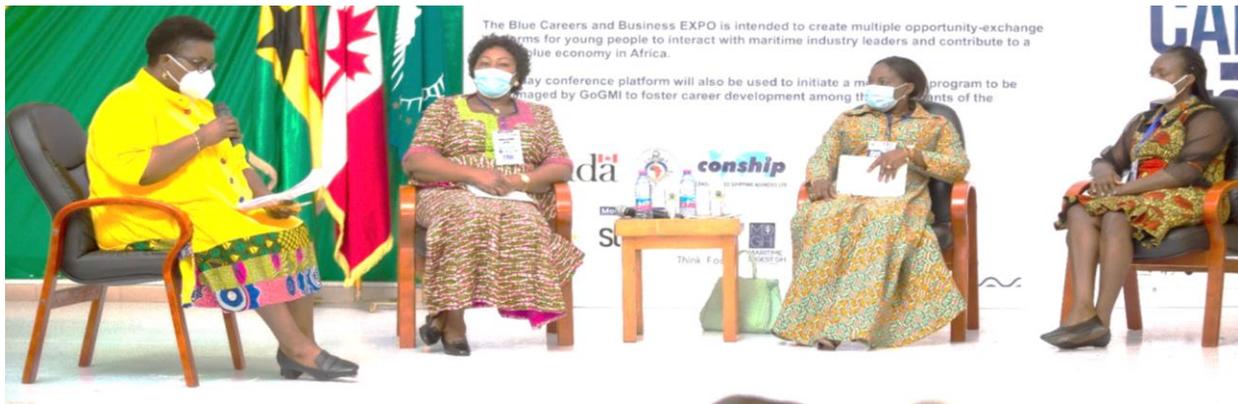
P.D. 4

Topic Gender Diversity – Gender Mainstreaming in Ghana's Maritime Sector

Moderator	Mdm. Esther Gyebi-Donkor	WISTA Ghana
-----------	--------------------------	-------------



<i>Panelists</i>	Mrs. Rekiaa Torgbor	Founder and Executive Director, Centre for Maritime Training and Development for Younger Women (CMTD-YW)
	Mdm. Sylvia Asana Dauda	President, Women in maritime in West and Central Africa (WIMOWCA)
	Mrs. Gertrude Adwoa Ohene-Asienim	FICS, Membership Committee Chairman, Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (ICS), London



Primary Issues Raised

- How gender diversity results in greater prospects for advancing Ghana's blue economy
- How women can be more effectively integrated into Ghana's maritime industry

Recommendations

- Gender diversity creates a holistic approach to problem solving in the maritime industry by allowing the adoption of varying, yet integral, perspectives.
- Youth, especially high school girls, should be groomed and nurtured to take up opportunities within the maritime industry.
- Fisheries (and other maritime subject areas) should be embedded into the educational curriculum to spark the interest of all young students, regardless of gender.
- Female role models in the maritime industry should equally be made conspicuous and projected to empower and encourage young ladies to get involved in the maritime industry.
- At the national level, there is the need to develop an adequate maritime institutional and legal framework to address gender-bias in the maritime sector.
- There is the need to encourage ladies in STEM disciplines, which is one of the major root problems of gender imbalance in the maritime industry.



P.D. 5

Topic Maritime Security – The Role of Women in Maritime Security for a Thriving Blue Economy

<i>Moderator</i>	Mdm. Joana Ama Osei-Tutu	Head, Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI)
<i>Panelists</i>	Capt (GN) Emmanuel Kofi Ankamah (Rtd)	Ghana Maritime Authority
	Capt (GN) Isaac Aratuo	Ghana Navy
	Capt (N) Manu-Popa	Royal Canadian Navy



Primary Issues Raised

- The nature of tangible or substantive contributions that women can make to maritime security and the advancement of the blue economy
- The nature of opportunities created for women to play coordination roles at sea

Recommendations

- National institutions within Ghana's maritime framework must systematically adapt policies geared towards the effective integration of women in primarily male dominated roles.
- There is the need for young girls to be actively encouraged within the national policy space to pursue STEM disciplines.
- Inter-sectoral collaboration is essential to the effective integration of women in matters pertaining to ocean governance and maritime security.

P.D. 6

Topic Maritime Transport and Shipping Services – Opportunities for Developing Technological Solutions to Enhancing Maritime Transport Services and Related Activities

<i>Moderator</i>	Mdm. Naa Densua Aryeetey	Executive Committee Member and Director, WISTA International
<i>Panelists</i>	Mr. Stephen Danquah	Country Manager, Kobo360, Ghana



Mr. Garvin Amavie

General Manager Operations, Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority



Primary Issues Raised

- Approaches to automating maritime transportation activities
- Grooming Ghanaian youth to embrace technological advancements within the blue economy space
- The importance of technology in enhancing maritime transport services and related activities

Recommendations

- Youth must be given adequate education and training to place them at the fore of technological advancements in the maritime industry.
- Capacity building at the tertiary level should constantly evolve to suit technological innovations in the maritime industry.
- Industry practitioners must be open not only to the exploitation of new technologies, but also to the unique ability of youth within the industry to successfully operate and manage such technologies.

Launch of Ghana's Blue Business Directory



Activities of the event also included the official launch of Ghana's Blue Business Directory by GoGMI. The directory is intended to serve as an online, open-access information hub, containing details of entities within Ghana's maritime industry, as well as unique the array of unique opportunities offered by the blue economy. The directory can be accessed on

<https://www.gogmi.org.gh/ghana-s-blue-business-directory>



LOOKING AHEAD

The BCBE 2021 was not meant to be a single event, but rather, the first in a series of events aimed at actively engaging African youth in the path towards building a resilient blue economy for the continent. The Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute looks forward to your interest and participation in our subsequent events aimed at this ultimate end.





PHOTO GALLERY

