



ISMRM

International Symposium on
Marine Resource Management

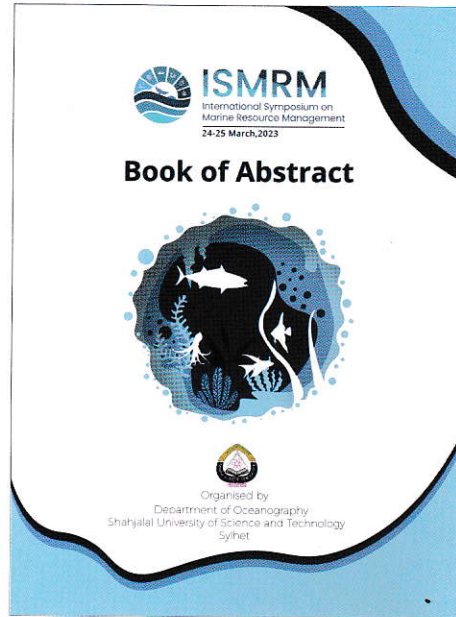
24-25 March, 2023

Book of Abstract



Organised by

**Department of Oceanography
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology
Sylhet**



Edited by

Dr. Subrata Sarker
Muhammad Mizanur Rahman
Md. Azizul Fazal
Abu Bokkar Siddique

Designed by

Shohanur Rahman
K.M. Zulkarnain Aymann
MD. Ratul Hasan Ripon
Md. Shahadat Hossain

Published by



Department of Oceanography
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology
Sylhet 3114, Bangladesh

A Study Report on Implications of Blue Economy in Bangladesh

Sanat Kumar Bhowmik,

Deputy Executive Director, COAST Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Abstract

Blue Economy is now considered a promising sector in Bangladesh that refers to the proper use of marine resources to fulfil food security, decent livelihoods, and economic growth of the country. Bangladesh has a 710 km long coastline with 200 nautical miles of an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) inside the Bay of Bengal. Marine Fisheries contribute 19.4% of the total fish production of the country. Undoubtedly, it has a golden opportunity to accelerate the country's economic growth through the sustainable use of these vast resources.

Blue Economy is not just an economic sector, rather it covers relevant maritime value chains, including backward and forward linkages. Considering this aspect, the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) designed and got approval to establish 88 economic zones countrywide comprising 59 government and 29 private EZs. Furthermore, the portfolio Coastal Zone (CZ) Projects Investment Plan reveals that 23 CZs were being implemented with a total investment of \$10,932.2 million, which restructures the entire coastal lands of Bangladesh. Additionally, the government has implemented several related projects to ensure the sustainability of fisheries while enabling responsible private sector-led growth. The major objective of all these initiatives is to promote the country from low-income to middle-income.

However, Blue Economy adoption may be profitable for corporate investors and global players, but the externalization of marginalized communities, especially the resource (Ocean and Coastal Commons) dependent communities like the inhabitants from Maheshkhali Island and Cox's Bazar district is inevitable and inclusive growth of the policy is a distant reality.

This study paper is an attempt to examine these initiatives for reformatting and reevaluating different ocean-related policies, legal and institutional reformation taken by the government, and their effects on the mentioned two specific areas including analyzing the impacts of global trade agreements. Moreover, some major consequences for the local people there especially the dry-fish/ shrimp farm

workers, contract Labourers for deep-sea fishing, and the living standards of women fishers, and environmental degradation were also assessed, which were identified through different viewpoints e.g., socio-economic, ecological, and political.

After scrutinizing all the findings, it is evident that the initiatives and policies were framed to comply with the global convention regarding fisheries regulation and management, leaving the welfare and social security of the mechanized fishers and the poor households who were relocated due to the expansion of infrastructure projects at stake.

The study brought out some critical recommendations, including the withdrawal of BE maritime cooperation agreements between Bangladesh and India in the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean Region, stopping forced relocation of coastal communities in the name of development projects, emphasizing local capacity development, developing inclusive legal and institutional frameworks, and prioritizing impact assessment, research, and innovation to ensure the protection of marine biodiversity and ecology and rights of the resource-dependent coastal communities.

