From commitment to deployment: scaling Ocean finance in 2026

The first edition of the Blue Economy and Finance Forum (BEFF), held in Monaco in June 2025, has established itself as a **catalyst for transforming ocean conservation** from a moral imperative into a financial reality.

Under the Presidency of HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, and co-organised by the **Oceanographic Institute of Monaco**, the **Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation** and the **Government of Monaco**, the BEFF brought together financial institutions, corporates, innovators, experts, and policymakers to accelerate the transition of the ocean from a niche concern to a **central pillar of sustainable investment strategies**. The BEFF moves beyond theoretical discussions, showcasing concrete solutions and strengthening collaboration across the blue economy ecosystem between public institutions, private investors and innovation ecosystems.

The BEFF legacy is defined by its role as a solution demonstrator and accelerator, focusing on tangible opportunities. This approach yielded unprecedented mobilisation of capital. In 2025, the BEFF mapped and identified over $25 billion in existing investments directed toward a regenerative ocean economy and secured firm new financial commitments totalling €8.7 billion by 2030. €1 billion of this capital was already deployed or ready for immediate deployment in 2025 across 50 high-impact initiatives.

These figures underscore the BEFF's role in **aligning capital, scaling solutions, and embedding ocean finance within mainstream financial systems.**

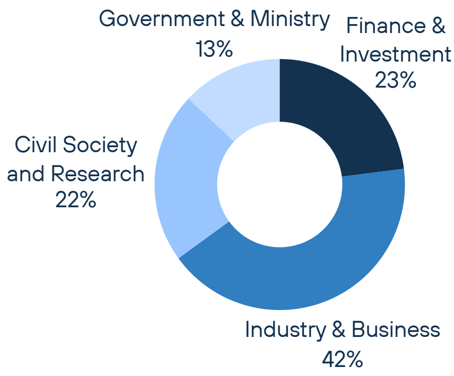
The 2026 edition builds on this momentum, translating commitments into action and accelerating the deployment of capital toward tangible, high-impact ocean solutions.

What BEFF 2026 delivered

- **Convening asset owners and corporate decision-makers**, to accelerate the shift from ambition to action, breaking down silos and creating a platform for collaboration;
- **Demonstrating that solutions exist and are already operational**, showcasing scalable business models (through an innovation corner and pitch sessions) and effective financial mechanisms;
- **Transforming scientific knowledge and policy ambition into financial action**, carrying forward the Monaco Blue Initiative legacy, connecting international ambitions with the investment mechanisms needed to deploy capital at scale.

2026 Key mobilisation numbers

47	60%	230
nationalities represented	representation of the private sector	organisations represented



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Insights from the BEFF initiatives mapping

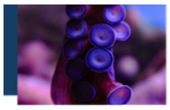
As part of the inaugural BEFF edition in June 2025, a broad call for initiatives facilitated the **collection, screening, and assessment of over 200 projects across the Blue Economy and finance landscape**. Since then, this database has been continuously enriched to monitor emerging ecosystem trends, positioning the BEFF as a key observer and convener dedicated to spotlighting blue finance initiatives. Three key global trends emerge from this analysis.

The Ocean is investable at scale

➔The ocean is increasingly recognised as a viable asset class
A strong signal of this shift is the rapid growth of impact-oriented blue funds. As the 2026 BlueInvest Investor Report highlights, 77% of dedicated blue funds were launched after 2021. This surge aligns with projections that the ocean economy could reach US$5.1 trillion by 2050 (OECD, 2025). The analysis of BEFF initiatives, which focus on the regenerative and sustainable blue economy, mirrors this trend with **impact-oriented blue funds accounting for 39% of the financial vehicles referenced**, each sized in the hundreds of millions of euros.

39%
of blue-focused funds in the €100M range

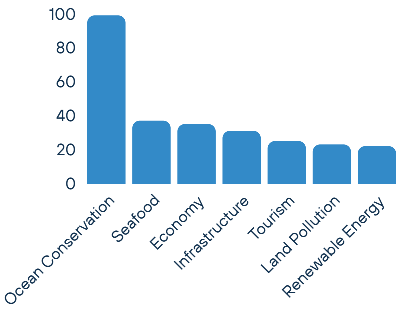
Examples of BEFF initiatives



Ocean 14 Capital | **SWEN Capital** | **ReOcean Fund**

From ocean conservation to sector diversification

Sectors targeted by blue finance vehicles referenced through BEFF's call to initiatives



➔Shift from marine conservation to larger industrial transition focus
Current initiatives focus on transforming ocean-related industries, such as shipping, materials, and energy, to **drive systemic and scalable impact**.

Examples of BEFF initiatives

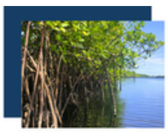


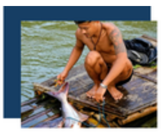
EURAZEO | **Aqua-spark** | **Regeneration.VC**

Inventing financial infrastructure to value the invisible

➔New financial and insurance products leverage nature services
A wave of innovative financial instruments is emerging, reversing traditional return logic by **embedding the financial value of ocean ecosystem services and risk mitigation** directly into investment structures. BEFF data shows that grants and loans remain dominant, but the **financing landscape is diversifying to include guarantees, insurance products, blue carbon credits, impact bonds**, and **blended finance solutions**.

Examples of BEFF initiatives





West Africa Blue | **Nautilus, The Blue Guarantee** | **Small-Scale Fisheries Impact Bond**

Other signals of systemic change

Mapping BEFF initiatives has revealed initiatives that are key drivers of structural change in ocean-related decision-making.

Blue Finance Coalitions
The #BackBlue Ocean Finance Commitment ensures that a regenerating and sustainable ocean has a seat at the table in finance and insurance decisions. The current cumulative value of the assets under management covered by the Commitment is USD$3.45 trillion.

Finance in Common Ocean Coalition unites 24 development banks with a shared goal: mobilising an average $7.5 billion annually for ocean protection in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 14.

Common metrics
The Ocean Impact Navigator provides a standardised framework to assess contributions to marine conservation, climate resilience, community welfare, and biodiversity. To date, over 850 ocean startups have committed to adopting these metrics.

Integrating the Ocean into national accounts
Ocean Accounts merge environmental, economic, and social data into integrated national frameworks to enhance ocean governance and guide investment strategies. Pilot programs are currently underway in Costa Rica.

Scaling Ocean finance in 2026

Mobilising capital for the blue economy: from blended finance to scalable investment

Exploring how to scale the blue economy into a credible and investable asset class for institutional capital.

Blue finance is reaching an inflection point: capital is increasingly available, but the market is not yet mature enough to absorb it at scale. Ocean data and blue energy sectors have achieved escape velocity by **aligning ocean solutions with strategic priorities** such as energy, food, water and supply-chain security.

To accelerate this transition, the **investor ecosystem should be expanded**, supported by blended finance, guarantees and aggregation platforms to **create investable markets**. As public funding becomes more constrained, adaptation and natural capital emerged as major growth areas, with increasing demand for outcome-based instruments that make preservation and restoration bankable.

Jean-Jacques Barbéris (Amundi AM), Adelaide Cracco (European Investment Fund), Steven Fox (Propeller VC), Karen Sack (ORRAA)

$2.5 trillion are generated annually by the ocean economy

Underwriting the Ocean

Scaling nature-positive investment starts with the design phase, integrating ecological considerations, involving relevant stakeholders, and executing a **comprehensive risk assessment over the entire lifecycle**. This can accelerate delivery, lower costs, including through risk planning, and generate more resilient infrastructure and financing solutions.

Blue capital reimagined: new financial instruments for the blue economy

Meeting the **$500 million ocean investment demand** requires dedicated funds through hybrid models. Innovations like the Small-Scale Fisheries Impact Bond and the Mangrove Catalytic Facility demonstrate how integrating resilience infrastructure can unlock viable market architectures.

Ocean Compass knowledge building tool

> ***The role of public investment is to act as a trigger, an accelerator, a leverage effect*** *capable of attracting greater private financing towards projects that deliver sustainable economic, environmental and social value.*
>
> **Catherine Chabaud**
> French Minister Delegate in charge of the Sea and Fisheries

Mapping the blue finance landscape

Measure what matters: standardising impact metrics for the Ocean

Standardised metrics strengthen the alignment of conservation objectives with investment decisions and unlock greater capital mobilisation. An analysis of Ocean Positive Metrics revealed convergence, though remaining gaps in biodiversity and ecosystem indicators still limit meaningful nature outcomes.

Ocean Compass: an experiential workshop on the Ocean economy

Designed as a knowledge building tool for financial institutions, insurers and companies to better understand economic and financial opportunities linked to the ocean, the Ocean Compass combines emotional engagement, scientific insights and a serious game exploring the case for a sustainable ocean economy.

Anchoring the blue economy: integrating Ocean finance into global capital markets

Building the financial architecture needed to connect ocean opportunities with global capital.

Daniela Fernandez (Velamar), Tom Hall (UBS Optimus Foundation), Nathalie Sarel (Crédit Agricole CIB), Lawrence Yanovitch (One Planet Sovereign Wealth Funds Network)

The ocean has innovation and growing investor interest, but still lacks the **financial architecture** needed to become investable at scale. Capital will only move if ocean-related risks can be assessed, priced and allocated through **harmonised standards, credible impact metrics and clear pathways to liquidity.**

Scaling ocean finance will require reducing the cost of capital and **creating replicable investment structures** that can attract institutional investors. It will also require greater **additionality and investment-grade pipelines,** with strategic entry points in ports, coastal resilience, mangroves and coral reefs, where ocean impact can be framed as infrastructure protection, risk mitigation and long-term value creation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

While investor interest and innovation continue to grow, accelerating deployment will depend on creating investment-grade opportunities, reducing perceived risks and strengthening the connection between science, impact and capital.

Path to scale: aligning pipeline, instruments and metrics will be critical to creating investment-grade opportunities, reducing perceived risks and strengthening the connection between science, impact and capital.

Anchoring Ocean finance in regional realities

Scaling the blue economy in Asia

- Asia-Pacific generates around **60% of global ocean GDP** and benefits from deep capital markets, growing innovation ecosystems and major intergenerational wealth transfers.
- The region offers high-potential sectors such as seaweed and ocean deep-tech, though requiring technological innovation, improved standards and supportive policy frameworks.

What really makes Africa's blue economy investable?

- Investment and scalability of early-stage initiatives is hindered by fragmented pipelines, limited catalytic capital, legal fragmentation across countries, and the lack of standardised KPIs.
- Successful ventures are rooted in local realities with community buy-in, particularly involving women and local populations.

Banking on blue in Europe: how capital meets opportunity, scale and deal flow

- "Policy to pipeline" perspective creating enabling ecosystems to provide technical assistance and connect start-ups to investors, like BlueInvest, accelerate innovation.
- Impactful funding is multilayered and adapted to all stages of projects with the goal of mobilising €1bn by 2028.

High Seas governance

> ***What science shows us is that the Ocean is the source and sustenance of life on this planet***
>
> **H.H. Sheika Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan**
> Frontier 25

BBNJ and marine genetic resources

Marine genetic sequences can be studied and developed sustainably, as demonstrated by the commercialisation of coral-derived UV filters. However, implementing binding obligations must strike a balance between preventing privatization of marine genetic resources and avoiding excessive regulation that could hinder innovation.

Deep sea mining : moving beyond extraction

Emerging alternatives, from circular materials to ocean-based innovations, can reduce reliance on deep sea resources and their scaling and financing barriers. Capital can be redirected toward more resilient, ocean-positive solutions, capable of competing with and outperforming extractive models.

Blue food at scale: feeding growth sustainably

Scaling blue foods: investment pathways for sustainable and resilient food systems

Unlocking the potential of blue foods to deliver food security, nutrition and resilient coastal livelihoods.

Blue foods emerged as a strategic response to food security and resilience challenges, though scaling them sustainably will require tackling bottlenecks within feed systems, value chains and geographic supply-chain concentration risks.

Scaling blue foods will require balancing growing demand with the sustainable management of marine resources through **greater traceability across value chains**, **increased investment in alternative feed sources** (such as insects, microalgae and fermentation-based proteins), which remain the sector's largest environmental impact, and **stronger support for small-scale fisheries** and coastal livelihoods, notably through outcome-based finance mechanisms.

Bertrand Charron (Aquaculture Stewardship), Kate Schweigart (RARE), Matts Johansen (Aker Biomarine), Mike Velings (Aquaspark), Chris Gorell Barnes (Oceans 14)

Up to 60%
of protein in the global South comes from small-scale fisheries

98% of seaweed
is produced in Asia Pacific

Unlocking the seaweed potential : investment pathways for sustainable and resilient food systems

Currently **valued at $10-20 billion per year**, the seaweed industry is quickly expanding into European and Latin American geographies, and is positioned as one of the most versatile and high-potential sectors in the blue economy. The most successful companies in this sector are those with end-to-end supplychain control.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The transition towards sustainable blue food systems depends on connecting innovation, market demand and enabling conditions.
Path to scale: Success will be determined by scaling solutions that deliver nutritional value and positive outcomes for coastal communities and marine ecosystems. Building long-term resilience requires linking ocean stewardship, economic opportunity and inclusive development across the entire value chain.

Decarbonising shipping: from commitment to investment

Shipping at the crossroads: financing the transition to a low-carbon Ocean economy

Exploring how investment, regulation and innovation can accelerate the transition toward low-carbon shipping.

Guillaume Branco (Eurazeo), Morten A. Lerø (DNV), James Marshall (Berge Bulk), Johannah Christensen (Global Maritime Forum)

While regulatory uncertainty and geopolitical tensions continue to slow investment decisions, significant emissions reductions can already be achieved through operational efficiency, fleet retrofits, port modernisation and the gradual deployment of alternative fuels. Success will depend on **coordinated action across shipowners, ports, fuel providers, financiers and regulators** to create the conditions for long-term capital deployment.

Pragmatic decarbonisation pathways combining fleet efficiency upgrades, onboard technologies, alternative fuels, and carbon capture solutions are gaining traction, with ports and "**green corridors" emerging as key enablers**. These approaches can mobilise **debt financing** and help SMEs manage growing regulatory and carbon-cost pressures.

Financing innovation for the transition of port cities

Scaling port-city innovations beyond pilots remains challenging, particularly for port electrification, emissions monitoring, and integrating climate adaptation. Mid-scale projects lack bankability and financial vehicles that connect competitiveness and climate adaptation involving development banks, private investors and export credit agencies.

> *The ocean economy does not lack innovation or data.* ***What it lacks is the financial architecture.***
>
> **Daniela Fernandez**
> VELAMAR

100 EU organisations are now certified under the Green Marine Label for shipowners, shipyards, and ports

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Shipping decarbonisation capital-intensive and still relies on efficiency gains and incremental technologies, hampered by regulatory uncertainty and fragmented frameworks.
Path to scale: immediate alignment across the value chain between regulation, infrastructure development, and capital allocation.

Nature, data and the future of blue finance

> *We have all been very diligent in our own silos, creating great outcomes but we haven't asked upfront* ***what does the ocean need from us to continue to support us in financial structuring of transactions?***
>
> **Marisa Drew**
> Standard Chartered

Circularity at scale

De-risking coastal resilience: governance pathways for a bigger, better blue economy

Limited access to finance and fragmented governance continue to constrain the potential of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Innovative instruments and stronger institutional coordination are enabling ecosystem restoration to become a driver of resilience and economic development, as illustrated by the Seychelles.

Nature, data and the future of blue finance

AI is emerging as a critical enabler, transforming fragmented datasets into actionable insights. Advances in biodiversity intelligence, satellite monitoring and data infrastructure are enabling more precise risk assessment and impact measurement, unlocking new financial products with automated verification and disclosure.

Circularity as an investment opportunity

Circularity : time to turn vision into implementation at scale

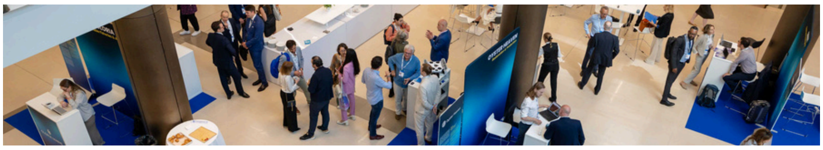
With **55% of major companies** now having a circularity strategy, the discussion focused on how to scale existing solutions in plastics, critical minerals and textiles with solutions that require little behavioural change, demonstrate clear economics, and can attract mainstream capital. Growing demand for critical materials is pushing companies to invest in recycling, materials recovery and supply-chain resilience, with AI emerging as a tool to manage complex circular value chains.

$855 billion in global value of flood protection by coastal mangroves over the next 100 years.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Circularity is evolving from fragmented pilot projects to industrial-scale systems, driven by growing pressure on resource security, supply-chain resilience, and geopolitical competition.
Path to scale: mobilise capital into circular infrastructure, strengthen value chains, and align industrial and investment strategies.

Pitch sessions and innovation corners



*We are missing **scale and speed**. We need **replicable structures that can absorb institutional capacity** at the pace humanity needs to maintain the functions that the Ocean can provide, and on which we depend.*

Ambroise Fayolle
European Investment Bank

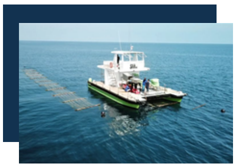
A highlight of BEFF 2026 was its **series of pitch sessions**, which brought together innovative blue economy ventures and their investors to showcase scalable, investment-ready solutions. Spanning sectors from ocean data and restoration to blue foods, shipping and circularity, these sessions demonstrated how **ocean-positive businesses are already delivering impact at scale**. Participating companies were also featured in innovation corners, providing further **opportunities to engage with investors, corporates and strategic partners** throughout the Forum.

bound4blue

Automated wind-assisted propulsion systems for ships, enabling up to 30% fuel and CO_2 reduction

hullbot

Autonomous hull-cleaning robots with 6.6 million kg of CO_2 already avoided

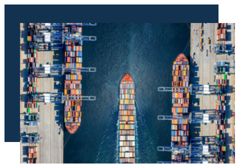


SEA6 ENERGY

Large-scale mechanised seaweed farming, creating sustainable feedstock

Oyster Heaven

Large-scale oyster reef restoration, with each oyster naturally filtering up to 200 litres of water daily



SINAY

AI-driven solutions enabling smarter and more sustainable maritime decisions, powered by over 2 million data points

Conclusion and looking ahead to the BEFF 2027

Only one thing now stands between the Ocean and the capital it needs: the decision to act. And a delayed decision is never neutral.
The cost of waiting on the Ocean is documented, it is rising, and it is paid by those who come after us.

HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco

The challenge now is scale - scale of ambition, scale of collaboration, and scale of execution.

Romain Ciarlet, Vice-chairman and CEO of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation

One message clearly stands out: opposing "economic development" and "ocean protection" no longer makes sense

Robert Calcagno, CEO of the Oceanographic Institute, Prince Albert I of Monaco Foundation

Looking ahead: the road to the BEFF 2027

The Blue Economy and Finance Forum is establishing itself as a **key annual meeting for the global ocean finance community**, with the 2027 edition set to further consolidate its role as a **platform for demonstrating concrete innovation and how to replicate and scale up what works**.

Stay connected for the next edition

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