

**OPENING REMARKS**  
**BY**  
**CHAIR OF SUB-COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**  
**H.E. Dr. Kaire Munionganda Mbuende**

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good afternoon

It is my pleasure and honour to welcome you to this side event focusing on the Blue Economy in the context of Sustainable Development, organised by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States

The ACP Group of States is one of the largest groups of developing countries in the world consisting of 79 Member States of which 37 are Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and 39 are Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Scientific evidence indicates that Small Island Developing States (SIDS), by virtue of their geography, will become increasingly most vulnerable to the devastating effects of climate change such as sea-level rise and storm surges, floods, droughts and extreme weather events, coral bleaching, coastal erosion and changing precipitation patterns. This evidence indicate significant threats to the ocean and marine ecosystem, from which SIDS derive their livelihoods and very existence.

Action to address the negative impacts, build resilience and support for adaptation to climate change, among others, is required. This should embrace the principles of Sustainable Development, ensuring development patterns that protect the natural resources, while tapping on their potential for economic and human development.

The Blue Economy approach can be viewed as an integrative and comprehensive approach. It takes into account immediate and long term objectives, within the different interconnected sectors, while incorporating social, environmental and economic issues at local, regional and global levels in coastal, island states and land-locked countries.

The main objective of the event is to facilitate dialogue and exchange of best practices among Small Island Developing States, including coastal countries in Africa.

This afternoon's high-level panel discussion will present examples on how on-going and planned activities within ACP countries are harnessing the opportunities offered by the Blue Economy to support their economic and human development within the context of sustainable development.

I wish you a successful meeting.

Thank you for your attention.