



# II SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY

INVESTMENT FORUM

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ESTORIL CONGRESS CENTER . CASCAIS . PORTUGAL

## PANEL 4

### **Ocean and Blue Communities (Ocean, coastal areas, and ecosystems: financing sustainable blue economy as a boost to the local development)**

The numerous activities associated with the blue economy sectors in seas and oceans have a significant impact on coastal areas. Coastal regions are traditionally attractive for establishing blue economy sectors such as maritime transport, ocean energy, marine research and innovation, shipbuilding, and water sports. This attractiveness presents environmental, social, and economic challenges for these areas.

On the other hand, severe storms, flooding, and erosion also have negative effects on large parts of the coast, which are likely to be exacerbated by climate change in the coming decades. Forecasts suggest continued rapid sea-level rise and an increase in extreme weather events. To address this reality, climate risk management and adaptation measures are needed to protect and preserve coastal habitats and biodiversity, vulnerable infrastructure, and economic activities. Preserving marine and coastal habitats is crucial to developing new forms of maritime and coastal tourism.

The response to these challenges must combine public policies to protect and recover coastal regions with investment in achieving these goals and developing the blue economy at a local and regional level to generate employment opportunities.

By doing so, coastal communities can help create innovative ways to reduce the environmental impact on the ocean while promoting growth and job creation in the blue economy.