

## **Economic Potential of Sri Lanka as a Business Hub in the Indian Ocean Region: Study Focused on Blue Economy Concept**

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### **Abstract**

The concept of Blue economy describes the strategic and sustainable use of marine resources for development of the economy and wellbeing of humans. The concept of blue economy is a sub section of “Green economy concept”. Blue economy links directly to the sustainable development of States. The term was introduced as a concept, by Gunter Pauli and the term emerged in the global scale after Rio+20 summit. The concept, mostly suits for Island States and least developed countries. This describes about a pathway to conserve the environment while boosting the economy. Diminished resources on land signifies the need of blue economy concept. The concept benefits to States by creating new employment and boosting coastal and national economies. Shipping and transport, seabed exploration, blue biotechnology, ocean renewable energy, fisheries, aquaculture, coastal tourism are the included priority areas of blue economy. Major economies of the world like China, European Union, United States, and Great Britain have adopted blue economy to their national strategy and gained higher GDP growth. Particularly, Sri Lanka as an Island State and being located in a significant geostrategic location has gifted with the ability to perform as a business hub in the region. The main aim of this study is to identify the potentials of blue economy and to discover, does Sri Lanka has utilized the available blue economy potentials in a sustainable manner. The study will takes up Qualitative approach and descriptive analysis. Primary data was collected by conducting interviews, distributing questionnaires and observation. Journals, books and other sorts of printed media provided secondary data to the study. The study uncovers the poor consideration of ocean health and marine resources and defects of policies which are connected to blue sector. Therefore, Sri Lanka need to enhance the blue economy industries by taking special consideration to ocean health and also Sri Lanka should be more interactive in the region to promote blue economy and to become a business hub in the Indian Ocean region by adopting policies which benefits to national interest of Sri Lanka.

***Keywords: Sri Lanka, Indian Ocean Region, Blue Economy, Business Hub, Sustainability***

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