

Financing Ocean-Based Solutions for a Resilient Future

In Episode 6 of Seas Of Opportunity, we spoke to Dorothée Herr about *financing ocean-based solutions for a resilient future*.

Dorothée works for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit where she advises on Ocean, Climate & Sustainable Finance. Previously she led the IUCN's international policy and private finance work on ocean-based solutions. Dorothée has had an influential role in initiatives such as the Blue Natural Capital Financing Facility and Blue Carbon Accelerator Fund.

Here are some of the key takeaways from our chat with Dorothée. You can listen to the full interview [here](#).

The term ocean-based solutions can cover many activities in the sea, from the regenerative to the more extractive, but where we see the biggest gains are those solutions that have a positive impact on the wider ecosystem:

“Where we get the biggest win-win for both climate, biodiversity – and I would also add broader development and food security – is when we restore and sustainably manage our ecosystems.”

This includes restoration of ecosystems like blue carbon habitats but extends to many other areas such as sustainable aquaculture. Combining these elements can help to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, increasing our resilience as the world changes around us.

Part of this adaptation also includes combining nature based-solutions with infrastructure, or *green-grey* infrastructure. Here, nature-based solutions can actually deliver economic gains when combined with other structures such as offshore wind.

“Examples could be along the shorelines where you combine sea walls or other types of concrete barriers that can actually help protect the mangroves or coral reefs around it...you can also look at ways of how nature & nature-based solutions protect infrastructure and create, for example, nurseries for fisheries and then actually make the maintenance cost for that infrastructure go down. So there is also an economic benefit for

infrastructure that can be protected by coastal ecosystems on top of the biodiversity or fisheries spillover effects.”

Scaling up private finance into ocean-based solutions is important for building a sustainable blue economy. However, these types of projects remain underfunded, risky and can struggle to deliver attractive financial returns. So what needs to be done to bring more private finance into ocean-based solutions? This is where governments and policymakers have a role to play.

“The shift towards private finance shouldn’t let governments off the hook. We need to continue to have governments play a role, whether it be supporting financially and what we call the de-risking part so that it becomes more attractive for the private sector to come in...But it’s also the policy or regulatory arm that governments really need to tighten because when we look at broader corporate activities we see a lot of voluntary activities in terms of reporting, or where big business wants to become greener or bluer, but it’s still very much on a voluntary basis. So I think there governments certainly have a very big role to play.”

If governments can play their part, then ocean-based solutions should become less risky and costly, but the private sector can help to drive progress here by demonstrating a willingness to take risks on these investments and showing what is possible.

“Investors big and small need to become less risk averse...we see investors take risky business in other areas but not when it comes to nature. I hope that we see much bigger initiatives, bigger players, doing the right move in the right direction but faster and with higher levels of commitment.

By bringing these elements together, countries have a chance to show leadership and set the precedent for successfully scaling up investment into ocean-based solutions, creating success stories that can be replicated elsewhere.

“What countries like the UK or in Europe can really show is how they apply measures or planning instruments like marine spatial planning and how those efforts can also be transferred in terms of skills or technology transfer capacity into other coastal countries around the world.”

To learn more about different aspects of building a sustainable blue economy, all episodes in this series of *Seas Of Opportunity: Navigating The Blue Economy* are available [here](#).