



OCEAN
INNOVATION
AFRICA

2026 Ocean Innovation Africa (7th Edition)

Africa's Blue Economy Summit

Powered by
Ocean Innovation Africa
with regional partners and
supporting institutions

23–25 March 2026
Durban (eThekweni), South Africa



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Who We Are



Ocean Innovation Africa (OIA) is a platform dedicated to fostering sustainable and equitable blue growth across the continent.

Established in 2019, OIA was created to inspire ocean-minded solutions, attract private-sector investment, and catalyse meaningful partnerships. It serves as a central hub for stakeholders spanning industry, government, research institutions, and the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem within Africa's ocean-impact space.

Building on this mission, OIA is delivering Regenerative Ocean Week (ROW), following the success of its first edition.

ROW is a collaborative summit designed to accelerate nature-positive, climate-positive, and people-positive ocean solutions across Africa and the Western Indian Ocean. Bringing together science, community insight, innovation, investment, and policy, Regenerative Ocean Week creates shared pathways toward a regenerative and resilient blue economy—connecting knowledge with action through the collective efforts of OIA and its partners.



Designed for Impact

OIA continues to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, with OIA 2025 marking our most impactful summit yet.

Key outcomes included the Dar es Salaam Declaration for a Regenerative Blue Economy, the African Science to Solution Forum, and the establishment of new communities of practice for small-scale fisheries innovation.



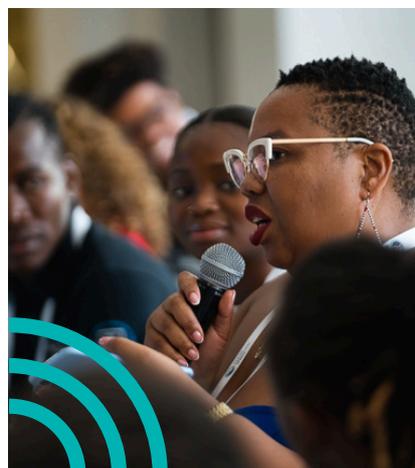


OIA moves beyond traditional conference formats to design dialogue that drives real insight and action.



Through innovative sessions such as Onion Sessions, Fishbowl discussions, Family Feud-style debates, and highly facilitated workshops, OIA creates space for honest exchange, constructive challenge, and deeper understanding.

By bringing lived experience, science, policy, and investment perspectives into the same conversation, OIA ensures complex ocean challenges are explored at their root. Action-oriented workshops then translate this depth into tangible outcomes, partnerships, and ongoing collaboration—positioning OIA as a platform that doesn't just discuss issues, but actively advances solutions.





Why Durban (eThekweni): A Strategic Blue Economy Hub for Africa

We chose Durban (eThekweni) for OIA 2026 because it's fast becoming Africa's blue-economy powerhouse. Its strategic coastline, major port, and bold investments in marine innovation and ocean governance make it the ideal home for a continent-shaping ocean innovation summit.

01

Strategic Position on the Indian Ocean. Durban (eThekweni) is one of Africa's largest coastal metropolitan areas, situated along major north-south and east-west maritime trade routes, making it a natural focal point for innovation in marine logistics, ports, shipping, coastal resilience, and ocean enterprise.

02

Demonstrated Ocean-Economy Commitment. Durban (eThekweni) has already positioned itself as an emerging maritime hub. A key example is the Blue Economy Week (24-28 Sept 2024), which was hosted here, signalling a strong political will to elevate the city's ocean economy agenda.

03

Home to One of Africa's Busiest Ports. The Port of Durban handles the largest volume of sea-borne cargo in Sub-Saharan Africa, forming the backbone of South Africa's maritime economy and logistics sector.

04

Thriving Ocean Tourism & Marine Lifestyle Economy.

Durban's (eThekweni) warm Indian Ocean coastline sustains vibrant sectors including fisheries, surfing, diving, snorkelling, boating, and marine leisure—important components of the city's blue economy.

05

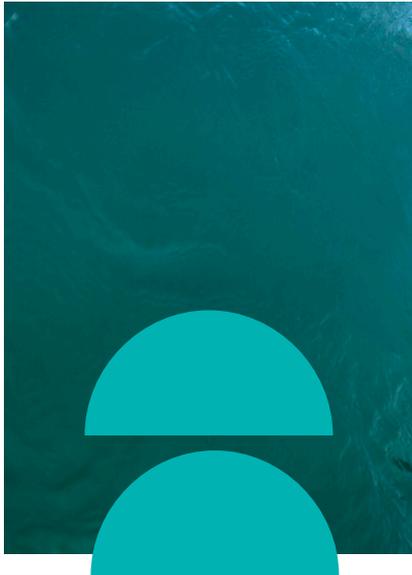
Rich Coastal & Marine Ecosystems.

The Durban (eThekweni) coastline includes the Beachwood Mangroves Nature Reserve, coral communities, estuaries, and biodiversity hotspots important for climate adaptation and nature-positive solutions.

06

Active Blue Economy Planning & Policy Alignment.

The city is actively developing "Blue Oceans Economy" value chains, including marine industries, logistics, sustainable tourism, aquaculture, and conservation.



Summit Activities

In 2026, building on the momentum of Science-to-Solutions, OIA shifts its focus to Accelerate Solutions, driving the adoption and scaling of designed innovations.

The summit will explore key pathways across Science-to-Business, Technology, Investment, and Policy to **advance the uptake of African-developed solutions.**



Ocean Impact Exhibition



Pitch Competition



Reverse Pitches



Hands-on Workshops



Science-to-Solution Sessions



Thematic Dialogues



B2B Matchmaking



Investor Roundtables



Executive Side Events



Community & Culture Sessions



Optional Impact Activation

At its core, OIA 2026 is about collaboration and ensuring innovation becomes real-world change.

Get In Touch

Alexandra Pattison

 +27 61 545 5107

 alexandra@ocean-innovation.africa

ocean-innovation.africa

