GSMA Digital Innovations for the Blue Economy—Global Research

Name of legal entity	Country	Overall project value (US$)	Proportion carried out by candidate (%)	No of staff provided	Name of client	Origin of funding	Dates (start/end)	Name of partners if any
Sustainable Seas Ltd	Global	US$45,000	100%	1	Urban Emerge	GSMA	15.7.2024 to 2.2.2025	N/A

Detailed description of project	Type of services provided

Detailed description of project

The mission of the GSMA's ClimateTech Programme is to unlock the power of digital technology to create a low-carbon and climate resilient future. In recent years, the emergence of 'blue technologies' has played a pivotal role in strengthening efforts to monitor and preserve marine ecosystems. These can range from the use of earth observation and sensors to improve sustainable fisheries, drones to help plant mangroves, forecasting and early warning systems for coastal storms, and digital marketplaces to support fishing communities. Emerging technologies have the capacity to disrupt the blue economy by improving the management of maritime resources, managing risks associated with the blue economy and scaling impact, when applied effectively.

While blue technology innovations primarily originate from the global North, there is significant potential to support their adoption in vulnerable coastal economies, particularly across Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Asia, Africa and Latin America. This requires investment in risk capital, development of quality data sets, awareness building, and learning from emerging global best practices within a rapidly changing technological landscape.

As an emerging area of interest, the GSMA ClimateTech programme aims to develop longer-term strategies to invigorate the blue economy market through research, advocacy and partnerships.

Type of services provided

Jonathan McCue (Sustainable Seas Ltd) was engaged as the expert on to help support Urban Emerge to undertake the following tasks:

- **Phase 1: Desk review and heatmap development** to identify, map and assess interventions against pre-determined indicators agreed upon with the GSMA in a matrix format, documenting trends in technologies, application, use cases and their socio-economic impacts, as well as partnerships and investment streams underpinning them in low- and middle-income countries.

- **Phase 2: Stakeholder mapping and interviews** that include practitioners working directly on digital blue economy solutions across LMICs, as well as digital innovators, NGOs, investors, and private sector actors, particularly mobile operators. Mr McCue conducted 25 in-depth interviews to answer key research questions.

- **Phase 3: Analysis, reporting and dissemination and blog development** that included content for the proposed series of three blogs intended for publication that embraced topics such as "Innovative Digital Solutions for the Blue Economy", " Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts " and "Policy and Investment Insights".