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Sustainable Blue Economy Conference

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The first global conference on the sustainable blue economy was held on 26-28th November in Nairobi, Kenya.

- The Sustainable Blue Economy Conference was organised by Kenya with Canada and Japan as co-hosts. India made its presence in the conference highlighting India's strategic advantages in Blue Economy.
- The conference builds on the momentum of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2015 Climate Change Conference in Paris and the UN Ocean Conference 2017 "Call to Action".

What is the Blue Economy?

Blue Economy refers to sustainable use of ocean resources for growth, jobs and improved living standards while preserving the ecosystem. It encompasses areas like maritime transport, fisheries, renewable energy, waste management, and tourism.

The Significance of the Conference

- The conference identified the potential of the blue economy to create employment, combat poverty and hunger.
- It brought countries together to learn how economic development and healthy waters go hand in hand.
- The conference captured concrete commitments and practical actions that can be taken today to help the world transition to the blue economy.
- The impacts of climate change and plastic pollution in oceans and waters has increased the need to develop an inclusive and sustainable blue economy.

India and Blue Economy

- India has a strategic location in the Indian Ocean Region, and on this basis, it endorses the growth of the blue economy in a sustainable, inclusive and people-centred manner through the framework of the **Indian Ocean Rim Association**.

- Under **Sagarmala Programme**, India is developing maritime infrastructure as well as inland waterways and coastal shipping which will revolutionise maritime logistics, creating million new jobs, reduce logistics costs and bring port-led developments in the country.
- Development of **Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ)** under Sagarmala, would become a microcosm of the blue economy, wherein industries and townships that depend on the sea will contribute to global trade.
- **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)** is India's vision for the Indian Ocean Region. It aims at sustained, peaceful and yet responsive presence of Indian naval ships in the critical area and choke points in the Indian ocean.
- The Blue economy is crucial for India's economic development.