



6,904

Views

263

CrossRef citations to date

42

Altmetric

Articles

Shades of blue: what do competing interpretations of the Blue Economy mean for oceans governance?

Michelle Voyer  , Genevieve Quirk, Alistair McIlgorm & Kamal Azmi 

Pages 595-616 | Received 24 Jan 2018, Accepted 30 Apr 2018, Published online: 15 May 2018

 Cite this article

 <https://doi.org/10.1080/1523908X.2018.1473153>



Sample our
Geography
Journals
>> [Sign in here](#) to start your access
to the latest two volumes for 14 days

 Full Article

 Figures & data

 References

 Citations

 Metrics

 Reprints & Permissions

Read this article

 Share

ABSTRACT

The 'Blue Economy' is an increasingly popular term in modern marine and ocean governance. The concept seeks to marry ocean-based development opportunities with environmental stewardship and protection. Yet different actors are co-opting this term in competing, and often conflicting ways. Four conceptual interpretations of the Blue Economy are identified, through examination of dominant discourses within international Blue Economy policy documents and key 'grey' literature. The way the Blue Economy is enacted is also examined, through an analysis of the Blue Economy 'in practice', and the actors involved. Finally, the scope of the Blue Economy is explored, with a particular focus on which particular marine industries are included or excluded from different conceptualizations. This analysis reveals areas of both consensus and conflict. Areas of consensus reflect the growing trend towards commodification and valuation of nature, the designation and delimitation of spatial boundaries in the

oceans and increasing securitization of the world's oceans. Areas of conflict exist most notably around a divergence in opinions over the legitimacy of individual sectors as components of the 'Blue Economy', in particular, carbon-intensive industries like oil and gas, and the emerging industry of deep seabed mining.

KEYWORDS:

[Blue Economy](#) [Blue Growth](#) [oceans governance](#) [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

Acknowledgements

This paper is built and expands upon earlier analysis completed for a report to the Sea Power Centre – Australia for the Pacific 2017 Conference. Thanks to anonymous reviewers of this and earlier drafts of this paper. Their comments and feedback significantly enhanced the quality of this manuscript.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Dr Michelle Voyer is a Vice Chancellors Post-Doctoral Research Fellow with the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS). She has a background in public policy development for marine protected areas and marine conservation management with a number of Australian Government agencies. Her research focuses on the human dimensions of marine conservation and resource management.

Genevieve Quirk is a PhD candidate with the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS). She has worked internationally in policy advising and advocacy roles for oceans governance reform in the South Pacific, EU, Antarctica and Australia.

Prof. Alistair McIlgorm is specialist in marine and fisheries economics and management and capacity development. He has had 25 years of experience as a fisheries economist, and has been involved in a number of studies looking at the value of the ocean economy.

Kamal Azmi is a PhD candidate in the Fisheries Governance Program at the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), University of Wollongong. Kamal's research is focused on rights-based management in transboundary fisheries. Prior to commencing his studies, he spent over 20 years working in the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade). He has extensive experience in international development, foreign policy and trade in the Pacific and East Asia, and has lived and worked in Solomon Islands, Singapore and Taiwan.

ORCID

Michelle Voyer <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6170-9994>

Kamal Azmi <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0789-4492>

Related research

People also read

Recommended articles

Cited by
263

Information for

Authors

R&D professionals

Editors

Librarians

Societies

Opportunities

Reprints and e-prints

Advertising solutions

Accelerated publication

Corporate access solutions

Open access

Overview

Open journals

Open Select

Dove Medical Press

F1000Research

Help and information

Help and contact

Newsroom

All journals

Books

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email

 Sign me up

