



BLUE INVEST AFRICA TOGO

Guidelines for Call for Applications for Pitchers

3rd edition of BlueInvest Africa

15 and 16 October 2025, Lomé - Togo

#BlueInvest Africa

TOGO.



1 Background information: what is BlueInvest Africa?

BlueInvest Africa is an initiative that is deeply rooted in the expansive concept of the **blue economy**, which encompasses a wide array of maritime activities and sectors. These sectors include both traditional ones, such as fisheries, and emerging fields like blue biotechnology. The blue economy encompasses activities in the marine environment, such as shipping and energy generation, as well as those on land, including coastal tourism, ports, and land-based aquaculture.

This sector provides employment for millions of people and generates significant revenue.

Both Africa and Europe have recognized the blue economy as a pivotal sector for realizing their socio-economic aspirations and achieving the objectives outlined in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, notably Sustainable Development Goal 14, focused on life below water. Over the past decade, continental strategies have been formulated, and numerous countries have introduced policies to promote the blue economy.

The potential of the blue economy is immense. If guided along a sustainable trajectory, the blue economy can serve as a source of economic growth, job creation, innovation, a protector of natural resources, a contributor to the fight against climate change and a provider of food security.

BlueInvest Africa 2025 aligns with **Global Gateway**, the European Union’s initiative to foster responsible and sustainable investments between Africa and Europe. By bringing together Africa’s **most promising blue economy entrepreneurs and international investors**, this edition offers a unique opportunity to create strategic partnerships, access new sources of funding, and accelerate sector growth.

The [first BlueInvest Africa event](#) took place in Seychelles in September 2022 and the [second BlueInvest Africa event](#) took place in Diani Kenya in July 2024. and was met with resounding success. Small and medium-sized business operators working in this sector had the opportunity to showcase their businesses and secure direct funding to expand their operations.

The 3rd edition of BlueInvest Africa is now scheduled to take place in Lomé, Togo. Togo is a key market for export and private investment with the potential to become an economic hub for the region (logistics, trade and investment, finance), thanks to the strategic role of the Autonomous Port of Lomé, the only deep-waters port in the region. As such, it plays a strategic role as an entry point to the wider West Africa region.

The EU is one of Togo’s key partners, being the second source of Togolese imports and fourth destination of exports (the first in the Western-Africa region).

We are honoured to announce that the event has received the strong support from the Government of the **Togolese Republic**.

The event is scheduled on 15 and 16 October, in Lomé, Togo.

This event will initiate the implementation of the principles underpinning the Africa-Europe partnership. These principles are rooted in the dedication to addressing the requirements of the African population, encompassing not only food security but also placing a significant focus on sustainable development and broadening economic opportunities for everyone.

2 Objectives

2.2.Objectives of and activities at the event

BlueInvest Africa is specifically designed to target **registered African businesses** already engaged in various sectors of the blue economy, including start-ups. It also aims to engage **African Small, Micro, and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMMEs)** officially **established in an African country** that possess innovative ideas with potential for further commercial development within the African market.

The event anticipates the participation of more than 250 attendees, along with remote participants from both Africa and Europe, including investors and entrepreneurs. BlueInvest Africa's primary goals include fostering valuable **business connections**, creating opportunities to establish a **network of potential partners**, showcasing **real-world business projects** from the field, and facilitating the exchange of **best practices** and **innovative ideas**.

The event has a clear objective. It seeks to spotlight the largely untapped potential in Africa, promote entrepreneurial initiatives, and encourage active participation from the private sector in the rapidly expanding blue economy of the continent. Additionally, the event is geared towards promoting forward- thinking and sustainable solutions.

To ensure widespread visibility, international media and press will be invited to cover the event. The **targeted audience** for this event includes:

- The **private sector**, encompassing African start-up companies engaged in the blue economy, including small-scale businesses.
- **International, regional and national financial institutions** and private investors.
- International, national, and regional organizations, particularly **private business platforms** within different countries.
- **Research institutions, incubators, and innovators** operating exclusively in the private sector.

The two-day international Business to Business hybrid event's program will **comprise pitching sessions**, site visits, B2B meetings, and networking opportunities for participants to connect with potential future partners.

For further details, a preliminary event agenda is available in Annex II.

2.3.Objectives of this call for applications

The primary purpose of this call for applications is to **identify and select proficient presenters**, known as "**pitchers**," who will participate in **BlueInvest Africa 2025 – Togo**.

This call also outlines the criteria and procedure for the selection of these **pitchers**.

Pitchers are individuals who represent companies or businesses. They will be meticulously selected and formally invited to participate in BlueInvest Africa, where they will be tasked with **delivering a dynamic and compelling presentation**, often referred to as a "pitch," for their ongoing or fully **developed projects**. These projects must fall within any sector of the blue economy, as detailed in the list provided below, and must be based in an African country. In this context, a project encompasses any product or service deemed unique,

moving beyond routine operations, and must encompass sustainability considerations throughout its production, delivery, distribution, or product lifecycle.

Up to **30 pitchers** will be selected for participation in this event. The selected pitchers will benefit from:

- The opportunity to deliver their pitches, **presenting their projects**, business ideas, products, or services **on stage in Lomé, Togo** during the aforementioned event.
- The chance to engage in face-to-face interactions with both **public and private investors** with the objective of securing deals and obtaining financial support for their businesses or projects.
- Access to **coaching and mentoring sessions**, either in group settings or on an individual basis, tailored to prepare them for their pitches.
- A unique opportunity to connect with fellow African project holders actively engaged in blue initiatives.
- Access to a range of side events covering topics related to financing opportunities.
- Direct access to development banks and other financial institutions.
- Promotion of their stories and projects through various media outlets and social media platforms, before and during the event.

The pitch is a **dynamic presentation** lasting between 4 to 5 minutes, offering a concise **overview of a company's project**. Within this pitch, you will present the project's core concept, the product or service it entails, its functionality and purpose, its value proposition, the target market, its uniqueness and innovation, the costs associated with design, production, and delivery, its sustainability aspects, and the required investment, among other key details.

The **primary objectives** of the pitch are to:

- Capture the attention and pique the interest of the investors attending the event.
- Persuade investors about the project's profitability, growth prospects, and its potential for further development, ultimately seeking financial support for the project's expansion.

To achieve these goals, the pitch should be well-structured, focused, and compelling. You have the option to deliver the pitch in either English or French, as interpretation services will be available.

The pitch must be delivered without the use of any notes.

The **potential investors** attending this event will include private investors, banks, and financial institutions from both Europe and Africa, all ready to invest in blue economy projects. These investors may encompass a diverse group, including private investors, business angels, private banks, public financial institutions, European banks, African Union-affiliated banks, equity funds, and investment funds.

3 Costs

3.1. Costs covered for the pitchers selected to participate in BlueInvest Africa

For the 30 selected pitching companies, **the costs for 1 person** will be covered as follows:

- **Coaching and Mentoring Costs:** The expenses related to coaching and mentoring sessions, both in group and individually (as determined on a case-by-case basis) to prepare for the pitch, will be covered for one person from each of the 30 selected companies. Participation in the coaching and mentoring programme is compulsory.
- **Round Trip Flight Ticket:** A round-trip flight ticket from the pitcher's home country's international airport to **Lomé** will be provided. All pitchers are required to travel to **Lomé**.
- **Hotel Accommodation:** Accommodation in **Lomé** for the duration of the event will be arranged. Pitchers will check in, based on flight availability, and check out after the event, depending on flight availability.
- **Local Transfers:** Transport to and from the airport and the hotel will be organized for the pitchers.
- **Meals:** Meals (breakfast as part of accommodation package and lunch during the event) during the days of the event in **Lomé** will be covered as part of the package.

The logistical costs of travel, including flight tickets, hotel accommodation, and airport- hotel transfers, will be booked and paid in advance for each pitcher. However, **no daily subsistence allowance or per diem (in cash or bank transfers) will be provided to the pitchers.**

3.2. Costs not covered by the organisers of BlueInvest Africa

The organisers of BlueInvest Africa will not cover the following expenses:

- **Passport Costs:** Any expenses incurred by the pitchers to obtain or renew their passports are the responsibility of the individual.
- **Transit Visa Costs:** If a pitcher is required to obtain transit visas for countries they might have to pass through during their journey to and from **Lomé**, these costs are to be covered by the individual. Transfers to the home address to international airport from where the pitcher travels will not be booked or covered.
- **Travel and Health Insurance:** Expenses related to travel insurance or health insurance are the responsibility of each pitcher, and these costs will not be covered by the organizers.

Additionally, if a pitcher decides to bring a companion, the organizers will not cover any costs associated with that person. Please note that due to logistical constraints, the organizers cannot guarantee the participation of any accompanying individuals.

Participants should plan and budget accordingly for these additional costs beyond what is provided by the event organizers.

4 Eligibility criteria for the pitchers

4.1. Projects falling within the following sectors are not eligible:

- **Projects that endanger marine and onshore ecosystems:** Projects primarily focused on activities that pose a threat to the ecosystems are ineligible for consideration.
- **Projects that endanger Indigenous Communities:** Projects that jeopardize the traditional life and communities of indigenous people are not eligible.
- **Projects linked to illegal and criminal activities:** Projects associated with or connected to criminal activities such as human and animal trafficking, child and women abuse, violence, drugs, weapons, tobacco trafficking, and similar unlawful practices are excluded from eligibility.
- **Projects involving civil-military cooperation and defence matters:** Projects that are related to or concentrated on activities associated with civil-military cooperation and defence matters will not be eligible for participation.

4.2. Selected applicants in response to this call must adhere to the following eligibility criteria:

Location and registration for eligibility:

- The pitching company must be **legally registered** and **actively operating in an African Union member country**. The organizers will make a concerted effort to ensure a balanced representation across diverse regions within Africa.
- Applications from **women, people in need** and **young entrepreneurs** are highly encouraged, fostering inclusivity and diversity.
- The company's head office or registered office must **be located in an African country**, and its primary business activities should be conducted within the continent.
- It is imperative that the pitching company possesses **intellectual property rights** over the product or service proposed by their project. A self-certification guaranteeing that the company is the owner of the intellectual property (IP) or exclusive licensee is required.
- **Guidelines for Call for Applications for Pitchers** must be downloaded, read through and understood before submitting the application. The Declaration of Honour and the Statement of Availability will only need signature from selected successful applicants.

Pitch Presentation:

- The selected pitcher is required to **be physically present in Lomé, in the event venue**, and deliver a presentation on behalf of his/her company, business, or project.
- The designated pitcher can be a founding member, director, CEO, or any individual closely involved in the decision-making and management of the company or business.
- Alternatively, a staff member designated by the company may also present the pitch.
- The pitching company is responsible for appointing a backup person who will stand in for the designated pitcher in the event of an emergency, such as illness or accidents. The backup person's details must be provided in the application, along with an indication of their availability to step in. Proficiency in both French and/or English is a requirement for the backup person.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) Status:

The company or business must qualify as a **Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (MSME)**, adhering to the definition outlined in the EU Recommendation 2003/361. Determining factors for MSME status will be assessed based on established criteria.

It is essential for all applicants to fully align with the criteria hereunder to ensure their eligibility for participation in this opportunity. To be eligible, companies must meet the following criteria regarding the number of customers and either turnover or annual growth rate (CAGR).

- a) Number of customers
- b) Either turnover or Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

| Company category | Staff headcount | Turnover | or | Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| Medium-sized | < 250 | ≤ 15 million Euros | | ≤ 5% |
| Small | < 50 | ≤ 2 million Euros | | ≥ 10% |
| Micro | < 10 | ≤ 0.5 million Euros | | ≥ 25 % |

These ceilings apply to the figures for individual firms only. A firm that is part of a larger group or of a holding must need to include staff headcount/turnover/CAGR from that group too.

The following criteria should be noted:

- ✓ **Group affiliation:** The specified financial thresholds apply to individual firms only. If a firm is part of a larger group or a holding, it is imperative to include the aggregated staff headcount, turnover, and CAGR from the entire group or holding.
- ✓ **Blue economy focus:** The project presented by the pitching company must centre on a blue economy sector, whether it operates within a maritime or coastal area of Africa or in African inland waters. The concept of the blue economy encompasses all maritime activities and sectors, encompassing both traditional and emerging fields, whether they are situated in marine environments or on land, including rivers, lakes, and deltas. Eligible projects in the following sectors are encouraged, provided they incorporate sustainability considerations into their production, distribution, service delivery, or product lifecycle:
 - Fisheries and aquaculture.
 - Bio-marine technology (utilizing living resources).
 - Coastal protection and nature-based solutions addressing climate change.
 - Key enabling technologies (e.g., robotics, sensors, materials).
 - Reduction of marine litter, notably from plastics
 - Marine services (such as insurance, monitoring, surveying).
 - Renewable energy solutions.
 - Shipbuilding.
 - Shipping operations.
 - Tourism ventures.
 - And carbon absorption operations.

The above list is not exhaustive, and candidates may propose projects within other blue economy sectors.

Alignment with **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**: The activities of the pitching company and the project being presented must demonstrate alignment with at least one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined by the United Nations.

The event organizers are particularly interested in projects that exhibit a **strong commitment to sustainability**.

Below are examples of sectors that can be in conformance with UN SDGs:

- Food security and Zero hunger
- Affordable and clean energy
- Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Responsible consumption and production
- Climate change
- Life below water (related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources)

| SDG | SDG title | topics | Possible areas for the projects | short blurb | for each sub theme (some overlapping) |
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| SDG 2 | Zero hunger | Sustainable food and feed from the ocean | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security, improved nutrition, promotion of sustainable practices • Fisheries, aquaculture, biotechnology, sustainable fish supply, small-scale food production, marine phyculture (seaweeds), oyster and other invertebrate farming (crabs/shrimps and crustaceans; micro/macro algae, cyanobacteria and seaweeds; bivalves and other molluscs; fish; worms and invertebrates (e.g. sponges) | Addressing the increasing global demand for food by exploring the ocean's potential as a source of sustainable and nutritious food through sustainable and equitable practices in both wild-caught fisheries and aquaculture value chains. | <p>Food Security and Improved Nutrition: Addressing the increasing global demand for food by exploring the ocean's potential as a source of sustainable and nutritious food.</p> <p>Highlighting innovative solutions that contribute to food security and improved nutritional outcomes for communities.</p> <p>Promotion of Sustainable Practices: Emphasizing the importance of environmentally friendly and socially responsible practices in ocean-related industries.</p> <p>Showcasing startups and initiatives that prioritize sustainability in their production processes and supply chains.</p> <p>.....</p> <p><u>Fisheries and Aquaculture:</u> Exploring sustainable practices in both wild-caught fisheries and aquaculture to ensure the responsible utilization of ocean resources. Encouraging the development of technologies and methods that minimize environmental impact while maximizing efficiency.</p> <p><u>Sustainable Fish Supply:</u> Focusing on initiatives that contribute to the long-term viability of fish populations and ecosystems. Discussing responsible harvesting</p> |

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| | | | | | <p>practices, monitoring systems, and technologies that ensure a continuous and sustainable fish supply.</p> <p><u>Small-Scale Food Production:</u> Recognizing the significance of small-scale and community-based approaches to ocean-based food production. Highlighting startups and projects that empower local communities, promote inclusivity, and contribute to sustainable development.</p> <p>.....</p> <p><u>Biotechnology in Ocean Agriculture:</u> Showcasing innovative biotechnological approaches to enhance productivity, quality, and sustainability in ocean-based agriculture. Promoting advancements in genetic engineering, selective breeding, and other biotechnological applications for sustainable food production.</p> |
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| SDG 7 | Affordable and clean energy | Ocean energy potential for all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all • Marine renewable energies, connectivity, energy, efficiency, investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology | <p>Harnessing the vast potential of the ocean as a source of affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy for everyone and encouraging collaboration between startups, investors, and policymakers to accelerate the growth of the ocean energy sector.</p> | <p><u>Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All:</u> Highlighting the need for inclusive access to energy, emphasizing affordability and reliability. Showcasing innovations that leverage the ocean's energy potential to provide clean and modern energy solutions for diverse communities.</p> <p><u>Marine Renewable Energies:</u> Exploring the various forms of renewable energy derived from the ocean, such as tidal energy, wave energy, and ocean thermal energy. Showcasing startups and technologies that harness these marine renewable energies for power generation.</p> <p><u>Connectivity:</u> Addressing the role of ocean energy in improving connectivity, especially in remote or underserved areas. Discussing how ocean energy projects can contribute to powering communication networks, supporting digital infrastructure, and fostering economic development.</p> <p><u>Energy Efficiency:</u> Emphasizing the importance of energy-efficient technologies and practices in ocean energy projects. Showcasing innovations that optimize energy production, storage, and distribution for maximum efficiency and minimal environmental impact.</p> |
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| | | | | | <p><u>Investment in Energy Infrastructure:</u> Incentivising strategic investments in the development of ocean energy infrastructure. Encouraging collaboration between startups, investors, and policymakers to accelerate the growth of the ocean energy sector.</p> <p><u>Clean Energy Technology:</u> Showcasing cutting-edge technologies and solutions that contribute to the transition to a clean energy future. Discussing advancements in energy storage, grid integration, and other clean energy technologies that complement ocean energy generation.</p> |
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| SDG 9 | Industry, innovation and infrastructure | Sustainable blue infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ports, b) digitalisation, c) ship manufacturing / building (incl. cruising), d) reduced maritime shipping emission, e) sand and gravel extraction, f) maritime safety and surveillance, g) logistics/storage capacities | <p>Developing and managing maritime infrastructure in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible manner.</p> <p>Sustainable practices and alternative materials to reduce the ecological impact of marine resource extraction.</p> | <p><u>Ports:</u></p> <p>Emphasizing sustainable practices in port development and operations to minimize environmental impact.</p> <p>Showcasing innovations in green port infrastructure, energy-efficient technologies, and eco-friendly port management practices.</p> <p><u>Digitalization:</u></p> <p>Exploring the role of digital technologies in optimizing maritime operations for sustainability.</p> <p>Developing smart port solutions, digital logistics, and data-driven approaches to enhance efficiency while minimizing environmental footprint.</p> <p><u>Ship Manufacturing/Building (including cruising):</u></p> <p>Promoting sustainable shipbuilding and maintenance practices, including the use of eco- friendly materials and energy-efficient design.</p> <p>Developing innovations in cruise ship design and operations to minimize the ecological impact of maritime tourism.</p> <p><u>Transport:</u></p> <p>Highlighting sustainable transportation solutions for both cargo and passengers.</p> <p>Showcasing startups involved in developing eco-friendly propulsion systems, fuel alternatives, and efficient routing technologies.</p> |
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| | | | | | <p><u>Sand and Gravel Extraction:</u> Addressing the environmental concerns associated with sand and gravel extraction from the ocean floor. Discussing sustainable practices and alternative materials to reduce the ecological impact of marine resource extraction.</p> <p><u>Maritime Safety and Surveillance:</u> Exploring technologies and solutions that enhance maritime safety while minimizing environmental risks. Showcasing innovations in surveillance, monitoring, and emergency response systems for sustainable maritime operations.</p> <p><u>Logistics/Storage Capacities:</u> Promoting sustainable logistics and storage solutions for maritime goods. Discussing efficient storage practices, green warehouses, and eco-friendly transportation within port facilities.</p> |
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| SDG 12 | Responsible consumption and production | Circularity and eliminating waste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources • Decommissioning of oil and gas platforms, recycling of wind turbine and large ships, bioplastics (algae), responsible tourism, food waste, waste management Biotech/pharma | Promoting sustainable practices that minimize ocean-bound wastes and foster circular economies in ocean-related industries. | <p><u>Sustainable Management and Efficient Use of Natural Resources:</u> Emphasizing responsible and sustainable practices in the extraction and use of natural resources from the ocean (and avoiding extraction when impact or consequences are unknown). Showcasing startups and initiatives that focus on minimizing resource depletion and promoting efficient resource management.</p> <p><u>Decommissioning of Oil and Gas Platforms:</u> Addressing the environmental challenges associated with the decommissioning of oil and gas platforms, turning a challenge into an opportunity. Supporting innovative and environmentally friendly approaches to decommissioning or, better still, repurposing offshore structures.</p> <p><u>Recycling of Wind Turbine and Large Ships:</u> Exploring solutions for the recycling and repurposing of end-of-life wind turbines and large ships. Showcasing startups involved in sustainable dismantling, recycling, and upcycling of materials from these structures.</p> <p><u>Bioplastics (Algae):</u> Promoting the use of bioplastics derived from algae as a sustainable alternative to traditional plastics.</p> |
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| | | | | <p>Discussing innovations in bioplastic production, applications, and their role in reducing plastic pollution in the ocean.</p> <p><u>Responsible Tourism:</u> Encouraging tourism practices that minimize environmental impact and contribute to local conservation efforts. Showcasing startups and initiatives focused on responsible tourism, including eco-friendly accommodations, low-impact transportation, and community engagement.</p> <p><u>Food Waste:</u> Addressing the issue of food waste in the context of ocean-related activities, such as fisheries and aquaculture. Discussing innovative solutions for reducing, repurposing, or recycling food waste along the ocean value chain.</p> <p><u>Waste Management:</u> Highlighting sustainable waste management practices in coastal areas, ports, and marine environments. Showcasing startups that offer innovative solutions for waste collection, recycling, and waste-to-energy conversion.</p> |
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| SDG 13 | Climate change | Ocean and climate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation, mitigation, decarbonisation, sea-level rise, green shipping, nature-based solutions, disaster risk management | Addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change and its impact on the ocean. | <p><u>Adaptation:</u> Emphasizing strategies and innovations that help communities and industries adapt to the changing climate, including rising sea levels, changing weather patterns, and ocean acidification. Showcasing startups working on adaptive technologies, resilient infrastructure, and community-based approaches to climate adaptation.</p> <p><u>Mitigation:</u> Addressing the role of the ocean in climate mitigation efforts, such as carbon sequestration and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Showcasing startups involved in blue carbon initiatives, ocean-based carbon capture technologies, and other strategies to mitigate climate change.</p> <p><u>Decarbonization:</u> Focusing on initiatives and innovations that contribute to the decarbonization of ocean-related industries. Discussing sustainable energy solutions, green shipping practices, and technologies that reduce the carbon footprint of maritime activities.</p> <p><u>Sea-level Rise:</u> Addressing the impacts of sea-level rise on coastal communities and ecosystems. Showcasing startups developing solutions for coastal protection, resilient</p> |
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| | | | | <p>infrastructure, and community engagement to cope with and adapt to rising sea levels.</p> <p><u>Green Shipping:</u> Promoting sustainable practices in the maritime industry to reduce its environmental impact. Supporting innovations in green shipping technologies, including alternative fuels, energy-efficient vessel design, and emission reduction strategies.</p> <p><u>Nature-Based Solutions:</u> Exploring the role of nature-based solutions in climate adaptation and mitigation. Showcasing startups involved in projects such as coastal restoration, mangrove conservation, and other nature-based approaches to enhance climate resilience.</p> <p><u>Disaster Risk Management:</u> Addressing the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters affecting coastal regions. Showcasing startups focused on early warning systems, disaster response technologies, and community-based disaster risk reduction.</p> |
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| SDG 14 | Life below water | Healthy oceans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing, coastal management/marine spatial planning/integrated coastal management, depollution, protection and conservation of biodiversity, marine protected areas, ocean knowledge/marine data/ocean observation, reducing noise from human activities. | Promoting initiatives and innovations that contribute to the well-being of ocean ecosystems. | <p><u>Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing:</u> Addressing the threat of IUU fishing through technological solutions, monitoring systems, and initiatives that enhance enforcement and regulatory measures to promote sustainable fisheries.</p> <p><u>Coastal Management/Marine Spatial Planning/Integrated Coastal Management:</u> Showcasing startups involved in coastal management, marine spatial planning, and integrated coastal management, emphasizing sustainable development, habitat protection, and community engagement.</p> <p><u>Depollution:</u> Focusing on solutions to reduce marine pollution, including plastic waste, chemical contaminants, and oil spills. Showcasing startups with innovations in waste management, cleanup technologies, and policies to minimize pollution in oceans.</p> <p><u>Protection and Conservation of Biodiversity:</u> Highlighting initiatives that contribute to the protection and conservation of marine biodiversity. Showcasing startups engaged in habitat restoration, conservation programs, and technologies that safeguard marine species.</p> |
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| | | | | | <p><u>Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):</u> Emphasizing the importance of establishing and maintaining Marine Protected Areas to conserve ecosystems and promote sustainable fisheries. Showcasing startups involved in MPA management, monitoring, and community engagement.</p> <p><u>Ocean Knowledge/Marine Data/Ocean Observation:</u> Highlighting the role of technology and data in improving our understanding of the ocean. Showcasing startups focused on ocean observation technologies, marine data analytics, and initiatives that contribute to scientific knowledge for informed decision-making.</p> |
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5 Obligations of the pitchers

The obligations of the selected pitchers, upon being chosen, encompass the following responsibilities:

5.2. Participation in coaching and mentoring sessions:

Attend **all** coaching and mentoring sessions provided by the event organizers. These sessions are designed to prepare pitchers for their presentations.

5.3. Pitch preparation and language:

Prepare a pitch presentation in French or English, following the guidelines and advice provided by the designated staff of BlueInvest Africa.

This presentation will be used to introduce and explain their project.

5.4. Physical presence in Lomé:

Travel to **Lomé** and deliver the pitch presentation in person during the BlueInvest Africa event. The physical presence is integral to the event.

5.5. Full event attendance:

Attend the entire BlueInvest Africa event, ensuring active participation throughout its duration.

5.6. Statement of availability:

Sign a statement of availability, confirming their commitment to fulfil all the above obligations and requirements.

5.7. Backup person appointment:

Designate a person from the pitching company who will serve as a backup. In the event that the primary pitcher is unable to travel due to emergencies such as illness or accidents, the backup person will take their place and be prepared to deliver the pitch.

5.8. Dissemination

Act as a BlueInvest Africa Ambassador, actively promoting the event through various channels and networks to increase visibility and participation.

These obligations collectively contribute to the smooth and successful execution of **BlueInvest Africa**, fostering a productive and enriching experience for all participants.

6 Application and supporting documents.



6.1. Application

Individuals interested in applying for this current call for applications must complete and **submit their online application** via the VC4A webpage or before the deadline of the 30th April 2025 by midnight (CEST time). Content of the online form is detailed in Annex 1.

Applicants have the option to fill out the application in either **English** or **French**.

6.2. Supporting documents are required to accompany the application and should include the following:

- An extract from the trade register or the relevant Ministry, serving as evidence that the pitching company is legally established and registered in an African country.
- A self-certification guaranteeing that the company is the owner of the intellectual property (IP) or exclusive licensees.
- A letter designating the applicant as the pitcher representing the company, in cases where the pitcher's name is not reflected in the official legal documents of the company.

Should the organizers deem it necessary for the evaluation process, candidates may be contacted and requested to provide additional information, clarifications, or supplementary documents.

7 Evaluation criteria and the grid

The evaluations of the applications will be structured in 2 steps:

7.1. Step 1 - Evaluation against eligibility criteria

The following criteria, as mentioned in section 4 and summarized in the table below, will be used to assess the eligibility of projects. Projects failing to meet these requirements will be excluded and deemed non-admissible for Step 2 of the evaluation.

| Criteria | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| Is the pitcher a key company member designated by the company for pitching (i.e. CEO)? | |
| Is the pitching company based in an African Union member country? | |
| Is the proposed project carried out in a blue economy sector? | |
| Does the project contribute to any of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? | |
| Does the project promote sustainability with a positive environmental and/or social impact? | |
| Does the pitching company have a business plan for the project proposed? | |
| Is the pitching company an MSMEs (including start-ups)? (based on criteria mentioned at point .3 | |

7.2. Step 2 - Evaluation against selection criteria:

Projects will be evaluated against the following criteria, and projects that fall below the minimum threshold



of 60/100 points will be rejected. Each project must score a minimum number of points for each of the four criteria, as indicated in the table below. Only the first 30 applications with the highest scores will be selected.

Before announcing the evaluation results, the organizers of BlueInvest Africa reserve the right to conduct necessary checks on the legal existence of the company and the project.

| Criteria | Score |
|--|--|
| Technical viability: robustness and quality of the product/service (section C, points 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24): Existence of the product/service at a prototype stage Added value of the project /product/service. Technological readiness level1 Tackling risks and challenges. Self-certification guaranteeing that the company is the owner of the intellectual property (IP) or exclusive licensees | Minimum 20 points out of a maximum of 30 points. |
| Market and value proposition of the product/service (section D points 25, 26 and section C, points 17 and 18) Presence of the project on the markets, which markets and where. To what extent the project is different from existing competing solutions; Existence of paying customers. How does the project contribute to improving the life of local communities (social, economic aspects) or to the end-consumers. Environmental friendliness of the product/service. To what extent have any risks linked to the project implementation been taken into account, together with mitigation strategies | Minimum 20 points out of a maximum of 30 points |
| I. Financial viability of the product/service (section B, point 15 and section E, points 27, 28, 29, 30, 31) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected return on investment. • Is the amount of investment sought in line with the planned project development? • Financial risk mitigations. • Previous funding received from public and private donors. • Use of previous funding. • Use of the sought investment. | Minimum 10 points out of a maximum of 20 points |
| II. Communication and management of the project (section F, points 32, 33, section B, point 11, 14, section C point 17, section A point 5, 6: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online presence, existence of communication and presentation materials. • Pitching experience. • Existence of a demo version for showcasing/exhibiting purposes. • Competence/experience of the project team. • Staff allocation. | Minimum 10 points out of a maximum of 20 points |

7.3. Announcement of the selection

The results of the selection process will be announced well in advance, ensuring that the selected pitchers have ample time to participate in the coaching program, prepare their presentations, and make necessary travel arrangements to **Lomé, Togo**. These results will be communicated to each selected pitcher and their



respective pitching company via email.

It is mandatory for the chosen pitchers to **confirm** their **participation** in **BlueInvest Africa** within a **maximum of 5 calendar days** after receiving the selection results.

Once a pitcher and their company/business are selected, an online debriefing meeting will be scheduled to provide detailed information about the coaching and mentoring program and the schedule of sessions.

Each selected pitcher will receive coaching and training to help them deliver a compelling and well-prepared pitch to present their project. The coaching program will be tailored to the individual needs and pitching experience of each participant, and it may include both individual and group sessions.

These coaching sessions will be conducted online through platforms such as Teams, Skype, Webex, and others.

To ensure readiness for the event, all pitchers must be physically present in Lomé, Togo at the latest one day before the event. Individual pitching sessions will be conducted face-to-face, followed by a general rehearsal of the pitching sessions. This preparation process is essential for a successful and impactful presentation during **BlueInvest Africa**

8 GDPR

The types of personal data collected may include, but are not limited to:

- Contact information (e.g., name, email address, phone number).
- Professional information (e.g., job title, company name).
- Information related to Event participation (e.g., session attendance, feedback, preferences).
- Application information, if applicable.

Legal basis for processing

Personal data processing is based on one or more of the following legal bases:

- Consent: Participants may provide consent for specific processing activities.
- Legal Obligation: Processing to comply with legal requirements.
- Legitimate Interests: Processing for legitimate interests pursued by the Event organizers.

Data security

The Event organizers take appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect personal data from unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, and destruction. Data security protocols, including encryption and access controls, are in place to safeguard the information collected.

Data sharing

- Personal data may be shared with third parties in the following instances:
- Service Providers: Third-party service providers who assist with Event logistics.



- Legal Obligations: When required to comply with legal or regulatory obligations.

Data retention

- Personal data will be retained only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it was collected, or as required by applicable legal requirements.

Participants' rights

Participants in the event have the following rights regarding their personal data:

- Right to access and rectify their personal data.
- Right to request data erasure (the "right to be forgotten").
- Right to restrict or object to processing.
- Right to data portability.
- Right to withdraw consent, where applicable.

To exercise these rights or inquire about personal data, participants can contact the following address: secretariat@blueinvestafrica.eu

Changes to the GDPR Chapter

- The event organizers reserve the right to update and modify this GDPR chapter to reflect changes in data protection laws or event requirements.
- Participants will be informed of any significant changes.

By participating in BlueInvest Africa, the participants acknowledge and agree to the terms outlined in this GDPR chapter.

The cooperation in complying with data protection and privacy measures is greatly appreciated.

For questions and clarifications please contact the Secretariat of BlueInvest Africa, at the email address secretariat@blueinvestafrica.eu

Annex II Tentative Agenda of the event

| Wednesday, 15 October 2025 | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|--|
| 7 h 30 | 8 h 50 | Participants' welcoming and registration |
| 9 h 00 | 10 h 00 | Opening ceremony |
| 10 h 00 | 10 h 15 | TED Talk 1 First success story |
| 10 h 15 | 10 h 30 | Group picture |
| 10 h 30 | 11 h 00 | Networking coffee break |
| 11 h 00 | 11 h 50 | First pitching session |
| 11 h 55 | 13 h 25 | Networking lunch |
| 13 h 30 | 14 h 20 | Second pitching session |
| 14 h 20 | 14 h 35 | TED Talk 2 - success story 2 |
| 14 h 35 | 15 h 25 | Third pitching session |
| 15 h 25 | 15 h 40 | Closing remarks of the day |
| 16 h 10 | 18 h 10 | Site visit |
| 15 h 40 | 16 h 00 | Networking coffee-break and prearranged B2B meetings |
| 16 h 00 | 18 h 00 | Networking activity |

| Thursday, 16 October 2025 | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|--|
| 8 h 30 | 8 h 55 | Participants' welcoming and registration |
| 9 h 00 | 9 h 15 | Day two opening remarks |
| 9 h 15 | 10 h 05 | Fourth pitching session |
| 10 h 05 | 10 h 55 | Panel discussion (Plenary session) |
| 10 h 55 | 11 h 15 | Networking coffee break |
| 11 h 15 | 11 h 30 | TED Talk 3 - success story 3 |
| 11 h 30 | 12 h 20 | Fifth pitching session |
| 12 h 30 | 14 h 00 | Networking lunch |
| 14 h 10 | 15 h 00 | Sixth pitching session |
| 15 h 00 | 15 h 15 | TED Talk 4 - success story 4 |
| 15 h 15 | 16 h 15 | Networking coffee-break and prearranged B2B meetings |
| 16 h 15 | 16 h 45 | Recognition awards for best pitchers |
| 16 h 45 | 17 h 15 | Closing ceremony |



Annex IV STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY

Call for pitchers BlueInvest Africa

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I agree to participate as a pitcher to BlueInvest Africa that will be held on 15 and 16 October 2025 in Lomé, Togo

I further declare that I am willing and available:

- To attend all the coaching and mentoring sessions recommended and offered by the organisers.
- To prepare a pitch to present my project according to the guidelines and advice of the BlueInvest Africa designated staff.
- To travel to **Lomé, Togo** and deliver the pitch on the spot during BlueInvest Africa.
- To attend the whole event and act as a BlueInvest Africa Ambassador
- To carry-out all the necessary procedures to obtain and pay the cost for my passport, visa and transit visas (if needed) to travel to **Lomé**.

I declare that that it is my sole responsibility to comply with medical applicable rules and measures in **Togo** and the countries I might transit at the time of my travel to attend BlueInvest Africa.

I declare that it is my responsibility to purchase travel insurance and health insurance associated with the participation to the above-mentioned event.

I declare that, in case, I cannot travel due to an emergency (sickness, accidents, etc.) my backup person will be

Name and Surname of the backup person (official name as on the registered ID)

This backup person is fluent in (please select the languages):

- English
 French

I declare also that I am fully aware of my rights and obligations having read and understood the provisions under the present call for pitching applications.

| | |
|---|--|
| Name and Surname of the candidate (official name as on the registered ID) | |
| Signature of the candidate | |
| Date of the signature | |



Annex V Declaration on honour

The undersigned

Name and Surname of the signatory (official name as on the registered ID)

authorised to represent the following legal entity:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Full official name | |
| Official legal form | |
| Statutory registration number | |
| Full official address | |

| Declares that: | YES | NO |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| The information provided within this application is correct | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The information provided within this application is truthful and lawful | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The pitching company is based, registered and carries out its activities a country member of the African Union | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The pitching company is a SME as defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The revenues mentioned in point B.14.2 are correct and true | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The pitching company holds intellectual property rights over the product/service to be presented at BlueInvest Africa or has the permission to use the intellectual property over the product/service to be presented at the event | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The project proposed by the pitching company is developed in a sector of the blue economy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The project of the pitching company has a sustainable dimension | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The project of the pitching company is environmentally friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The project of the pitching company contributes to improving the life of local communities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The pitching company has a business plan available upon request | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The product/service of the pitching company is at least at a prototype phase | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Funding and sources of finance

The undersigned

Name and Surname of the signatory (official name as on the registered ID)

Representing the

Name of the company

declares that the funding and sources of finance received by the company up to the moment of the deadline of the present call for applications are (please tick the box(es) applicable to you):

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public funds from: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Government of my country |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Government of other countries, if yes please state of which one: ... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Regional or local authorities in my country |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | International organisations such as: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | European Union (by any of its institutions, agencies or programmes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | USAID |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | World Bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Financing institutions such as European Investment Bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | United Nations Programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other, please state which ones: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Private funds from: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Banks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Angels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Crowd funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Investment funds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Personal savings and family support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) |

| | |
|---|--|
| Name and Surname of the candidate (official name as on the registered ID) | |
| Signature of the candidate | |
| Date of the signature | |