

GERMAN INDO-PACIFIC VISION: PAKISTAN AS A STRATEGIC HUB

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ABSTRACT

The post-Cold War international system has entered a turbulent phase, with states confronting an increasing number of political, economic, and security pressures. Uncertainty has intensified since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, much like a storm brewing to cause international uncertainty. Here, Germany has sought to uphold the principles of multilateralism, a rule-based international order, and collaboration. The above principles have, in recent years, been integrated into mechanisms aimed at balancing policymaking based on the determination of interests with limited resources, to ensure efficiency in the face of increasing global pressures. Similarly, Pakistan has also responded to shifting geopolitical dynamics by formulating a national policy initiative, as evidenced by the development of a national policy framework in 2022. By adopting a qualitative approach, this paper critically analyses the guiding principles of Germany and the Republic of Pakistan and limits the field of actions in economic and trade-related areas, where the cooperation activities are mainly bound, as the major sources of cooperation. The results indicate that the coordinated efforts that can supersede sectoralism and the project-based approach can lead to the realisation of a comprehensive development due to the importance of the connection with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the emerging blue economy. The strengthening of the German-Pakistani collaboration in this regard would also stabilise their rather long-term collaboration and empower both sides to address future storms in the geopolitical context better armed, and help bring mutual prosperity and security.

KEYWORDS: *German Indo-Pacific Vision, Pakistan, Multilateralism, Blue Economy, Geopolitical Dynamics.*

INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of its policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific Region (PGIP) in 2020, Germany has been confronted by new challenges caused by climate change and the Russian war against Ukraine, which was still in its infancy at the time of publication. In conjunction with the National Security Strategy (NSS), these policies prioritise peace, security, stability, and a rules-based international order, based on which Germany plans its political and economic activities in the context of the changing geopolitical situation (Conclusions, 2004). Influenced by upheavals and located in India as well as on the Arabian Sea, Pakistan is now undergoing an increasing degree of exposure to these. Its geopolitical location means that it is entangled in the arguments of the Global South, where BRICS

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countries (other than Brazil) dispute the Western-dominated status quo. Pakistan, like Germany, does not abandon the rules-based international system, as opposed to the response of Pakistan to the Iran border incident in January 2024 (Pakistan National Security Division, 2022). The existing mutuality on this front highlights the convergence of interests and leads to the question of the extent to which German and Pakistani interests, and more specifically those mentioned in the Pakistani National Security Policy (NSP), can be mutually beneficial. The Makran coast of Pakistan, and in particular Gwadar, which is the only deep-sea port of the country, is a strategic and economic hotbed. Regarded as one of the areas of development, it has become even more important with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Despite ongoing infrastructure development and improvements to port facilities, there is a general lack of activity in advancing the coastal and marine economy, particularly in areas that align with the blue economy and biodiversity conservation (German Federal Foreign Office, 2020).

GERMAN INDO-PACIFIC POLICY AND PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY: PROSPECTS FOR STRATEGIC COOPERATION

Policy guidelines on the Indo-Pacific (PGIP, 2020) were formulated to protect the national economic interests in the region, which will be further elaborated in the National Security Strategy (NSS, 2023), when the China strategy translates to being part of the response to the war in Ukraine. The war emphasised the interdependence of worldwide security, which obliged Germany to reiterate its allegiance to the Indo-Pacific (German Federal Foreign Office, 2023). Progress reports emphasise threats to the rules-based order that include regional hostilities, militarisation, and global crises. Germany is a country that plans to intensify its involvement in making international law, climate change, diversification, inclusion, and socio-economic stability. The policies establish the framework of long-term collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region, especially with Pakistan through its economic and trade connections, security in the Arabian Sea, and stability in the region (Pakistan National Security Division, 2022).

The NSS of Germany (2023) is the first to present a real, holistic concept of security, which exceeds defence: energy security, health security, technological security, and climate resilience. It reports security danger inside an economic relationship and specifically points to semiconductors, medical goods, key raw materials, and renewable energy technologies. The protection of critical infrastructure and the prevention of one-sided dependency are the priorities (German Federal Foreign Office, 2024). In the Indo-Pacific, Germany aims to mitigate the country-specific effects of BRI by adopting the concept of multilateralism, the promotion of sustainable trade, and infrastructure-building projects such as the European Union Global Gateway, or the global initiative by the Group of Seven to build a Global Gateway and Infrastructure and Investment. There are no critical dependencies on Pakistan, although Germany strongly focuses on cooperation via EU trade policy, climate action, development partnerships, and supply chain resilience. Development policy will be more strongly connected to the strategic interests of Germany, such as the acquisition of alternative raw materials and the promotion of sustainable development in partner states.

Maritime security continues to be paramount to the trade routes as well as critical infrastructure, but the NSS does little about the UN Sustainable Development Goals –

especially SDG 14, to the blue economy (Medcalf, 2020). Germany has had a series of policy guidelines towards the Indo-Pacific as a guiding guide to inform foreign policy in the region. They want to find the means of cooperation with the partners of the region, as well as maintain the possibilities of Germany as a global trading country, and retain its position in the international order based on the rules. The policy concentrates on participation in the economic development in Asia, the determination of regional dynamics, and the establishment of international standards. The PGIP is organised into three sections: summary, fields of action, and Germany's position in the Indo-Pacific (Harnisch, 2017). The PGIP attributes human and economic security, the diversification of relations, independence of non-alignment in unipolarism or bipolarism, freedom of sea routes, markets and free trade, the march to digitalisation and connectivity, access to factual information, and environmental policies as eight of the fundamental interests (German Federal Foreign Office, 2020). Germany makes an effort to maintain universal standards based on legal means, adheres to the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, and upholds universal human rights at the same time to honour regional histories and cultures (German Federal Foreign Office, 2023).

The PGIP makes clear where Germany shares links with Pakistan: Germany is present in Pakistan via its embassy and an advisor on economic cooperation, the German Development Cooperation (GIZ); the German Chamber of Commerce [Abroad] (AHK) and the German Trade and Invest (GTAI) are not present in the country but are present through their representations in the Arab region. Up to 60,000 Pakistanis are also reported to be studying German; German universities have up to 50 cooperation agreements with Pakistani universities, and approximately 10,000 Pakistanis are studying there in Germany (Auswärtiges Amt, 2021). Germany also favours regional inclusive efforts, where all states promoting peace, security, and stability achieve the benefits of containment and decoupling strategies (which are not seen as effective). Germany also seeks to collaborate with Indo-Pacific states in the third countries in the partner approach and as an equal in the sense of taking on global responsibility when there is a willingness to do so. The German government provides an update on the progress of individual areas of action defined in the PGIP by reporting on the state of progress in the 2021, 2022, and 2023 progress reports. In this research paper, it is only the fields of Action 5 and 6, the strengthening of rules-based, fair, and sustainable free trade and networking, and digitally transforming spaces and markets based on rules, that are going to be discussed (German Federal Foreign Office, 2020).

The current version of the EU efforts in this regard is the so-called Global Gateway, which appears to be an updated version of the Asia-focused connectivity strategy and encompasses digital, energy, transport, health, education, and research, and high-quality, sustainable infrastructure. Unlike the earlier splintered consortia, flagship projects are currently organised on a worldwide basis, with 15 of 90 located in Asia as of early 2023. Such oversight is guaranteed by the Global Gateway Board and a Business Advisory Group between the EU and the business sector (German Federal Foreign Office, 2023). Among the key initiatives are the EU-Singapore digital dialogue (AI, IoT, smart cities, fintech), the regional project DigitalSkills2Succeed (Bangladesh, India, Vietnam), and the EU-ASEAN Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA, 2021) that concerns air safety, consumer

protection, and environmental outcomes. As well as the financing of India in reliable urban development (evacuation, sewers, climate-proof) (German Federal Foreign Office, 2021). Potential cooperation in Pakistan includes:

- Taking part in Global Gateway infrastructure projects
- Participation in DigitalSkills2Succeed to enhance youth employability.
- The coordinated air transport safety and regulation collaboration.

Pakistan has ratified its first National Security Policy (NSP) after Germany codified its first National Security Policy (PGIP) on 14 January 2022. Formulated in collaboration with the 9th Political Advisor of the government, with the participation of various fields of society, the NSP answers the events happening in the world that are seen negatively and explains the need to set up reforms in order to guarantee a self-determined future with less reliance on external capital. It gives outlines of ministerial agendas, with wide support in society towards change. The following discussion is on the economic and trade aspects of NSP in a bid to compare it with German aspects (Pakistan National Security Division, 2022). The National Security Policy (NSP, 2022) has focused on economic security as the root of national security, with improved growth being the key to better defence, human security, and political stability. The policy presents a geo-economic approach to complement the geo-strategic approach with an emphasis on sustainable and inclusive growth to increase national resources, decrease dependency, and increase the global economic presence of Pakistan. (German Federal Foreign Office, 2021).

GERMAN-PAKISTANI COOPERATION IN THE BLUE ECONOMY: COASTAL DEVELOPMENT AND SHARED OPPORTUNITIES

According to the majority of publications about the blue economy of Pakistan, the country is congratulated for its strategic position in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, since it also serves as a hinge between China and the Arabian Peninsula (as the centre of the Western Indian Ocean trade), Central Asia, and – possibly, in the distant future – India. The Himalayan hinterland and the 290,000 square kilometre Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with the part of the extended continental shelf serve to illustrate even more geographical advantages of Pakistan (Pakistan Navy, 2018). This, however, has been the experience in the past, as evident in the National Security Policy (NSP), as Pakistan has been acting like a landlocked country with minimal strategic interest in both the marine economy and ecology. Although the NSP attests to unexplored areas of connecting trade, resource exploration, shipbuilding, port infrastructure, fisheries, and coastal tourism, in fact, only Karachi has been developing significantly, and even Gwadar port may see some activity in the future as part of the ongoing strategic alliance with China (Pakistan National Security Division, 2022). This neglect can be traced back to the colonial history of British India, which has defined the uneven economic geography of Pakistan and forms a source of socio-economic inequality to this day.

The paradox is evident: Pakistan has the potential to develop a blue economy, as it has untapped maritime resources that could help it come out of its dependency on foreign donors, but the development of a sustainable blue economy seemingly has its limits unless

specific partnerships and development cooperation efforts are made with better economies like Germany. In such a background, how the blue economy and its potential are perceived and prioritised in Pakistan is the main question (Barrech, Brohi, and Ullah, 2021). The blue economy of Pakistan has little or no development in its main sectors. Fisheries, which employ about 15,000 households represented by 12,000 enterprises, bring in about one per cent of the GDP, whereas the marine resources in territorial waters and the EEZ remain unaffected by other industrial practices except those of conventional fish harvesting and mangrove logging, and no mineral exploration is in effect (Humayun and Zafar, 2014). The maritime trade highlights the relevance of this dependency: close to 90 percent of imports are coming via the seas, yet the shipping industry is dominated by the global firms, and the new deep-sea port at Gwadar has not managed to make a difference in terms of substantial exports beyond the limited agricultural products and the transit trade among the Central Asian states and Afghanistan.

There is also little energy production offshore, with crude oil and natural gas both yet to be produced on a large scale, and only planned refinery development, except for plans to build a refinery and a heavy oil terminal as part of the capitalisation. Even the natural coastline of Pakistan, e.g., scenic spots such as Omara and Gwadar beaches, has yet to be developed. Meanwhile, the potential of utilising renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, geothermal, tidal, and biogas, has mostly not been realised, especially in wind and tidal (United Nations, 2024). The real task, he said, is maintaining all ocean sustainability criteria, such as overseeing fisheries and maintaining healthy ecosystems, through overseeing possible pollution processes, via collaborating with other countries on the same level as never before. Such a definition makes the blue economy inseparable from the maintenance of marine ecosystems (Gill and Iqbal, 2021).

In Pakistan, however, much of the discussion, including that which I have discussed, is quite narrow in scope and views the blue economy as a question of exploring coastal and marine resources. It is prioritised to develop the less utilised coastal areas and to create many jobs and drive urbanisation instead of patterns that are smart and sustainable by protecting the uniqueness and the ecological integrity of the Pakistan coast. This way of proceeding leads to risking that which forms the sustainability of a blue economy (Pakistan Observer, 2023). In this regard, the CPEC has become a cornerstone of the blue economy that is expected to serve as a multiplier. A recent report on the role of CPEC provides a graphic example of this, but the report is basically on maritime trade and not the blue economy as a whole. It also underlines the geostrategic significance that Gwadar holds for China and the necessity to establish access to the Indian Ocean, and it then outlines some of the projects that are being run there, with an exclusive interest in benefiting the Chinese economy (Butt et al., 2024).

In the case of Pakistan, the benefits reported are mostly local in nature – investments in roads, railways, energy, development of Gwadar, development of special economic zones, and fibre optic networks – with little concern that these benefits will translate to a sustainable marine and coastal economy. The paper ends by stating that there is a large blue economy potential in Pakistan and that CPEC can be a positive way to do it, but it does not present the path through which this potential can be achieved sustainably. The total absence of analyses incorporating such a wartime dynamic is a symptom of a broader

problem of simplistic approaches to understanding how Pakistan will be able to unlock its blue economy responsibly (Gill and Iqbal, 2021). A more recent analysis underlines the reasons why the growth of the blue economy, associated with the CPEC project, is sluggish. A weak regulatory framework, weakness in institutions, poor maritime infrastructure, insecurity, gaps in technology, weakness in human capital, lack of economic certainty, and political instability are the main limitations (Butt et al., 2024).

The analysis leads to the conclusion that the sustainable development of a blue economy could be the guarantee of long-term prosperity for Pakistan and coastal communities in the country and the preservation of marine ecosystems. To make this work, the blue economy will have to be prioritised systematically at all levels of governance. This needs effective coordination between the Ministry of Maritime Affairs (Horizon MoMA), the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (Horizon MoPDSI), and the Provincial Departments of Planning and Development (P&D) in the context of a comprehensive national policy. By the start of 2024, it has been realised that the blue economy is becoming gradually clear in Pakistan, as it is supposed to be an economy that is dedicated to sustainability. The changing view is echoed in the political rhetoric as well. The Blue Economy has the massive potential of sustainability of financial stability and development of Pakistan, and the current government has put this in its agenda under the prospective development of the country, said the Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives in June 2023.

The same Foreign Minister recently highlighted the significance of an integrated policy framework and the facilitation of the domestic ecosystem towards achieving the maritime and Blue Economy potential of Pakistan and also mentioned that proactive coordinated efforts were required to achieve effective international collaboration in the maritime area (Askari, Tahir, and Shaheen, 2020).

Adopting a holistic approach to the blue economy of Pakistan would also be congruent with the German development priorities, since such enabling conditions would pave the way for further engagement of the German people and companies. The same orientation is already predicted in a 2022 study, which aimed to raise the attention of policymakers to the potential maritime aspect that has been currently being underexploited in the country. However, the literature warns that until and unless the policymakers can get out of the syndrome of sea blindness, institutional and sustained support to various sectors of the Blue Economy will remain elusive (Agarwal, 2022). They highlighted several measures, including enhancing institutional capacities, investing in human capital, initiating technology and infrastructure-related initiatives, enabling coastal populations and other underserved groups (especially women and youth), incentivising the private sector, providing accurate and timely data to support evidence-based policymaking, bolstering strategic regional and international relationships, and improving indigenous R&D agendas to tap the potential of the blue dividends (Aijaz and Butt, 2023).

Gill and Iqbal affirm that the blue economy is an inclusive strategy that links people, the planet, and the environment. The ocean economy is associated with short-term economic benefits in most countries at the expense of consideration of social inclusion and environmental sustainability. To address this disequilibrium, in 2021, the United Nations proclaimed the 2021-2030 period as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable

Development, a framework to further overcome disparities in capacity building and develop holistic solutions for resilient oceans and sustainable futures. These solutions are also very applicable and possible in Pakistan, as it aims to integrate its policy on sustainable ocean-based development (Choudhury, 2023). In its blue economy analysis, the United Nations points to multisectoral governance in requiring the balance of sustainable human exploitation and environmental conservation and equity, informed by extensive and integrated marine spatial planning, and with total participation by all stakeholders. However, the report highlights the lack of a commonly agreed definition of the blue economy, ambiguity surrounding the cooperation between stakeholders, the roles of science, and the outline of financing mechanisms of a sustainable ocean economy. Nonetheless, it gives a nice orientation with more than 40 pages of analysis based on four central themes that include finding a shared meaning of the blue economy, practical examples of what has been done, challenges to its attainment, and what is learnt so far in some of the initial cases of sustainable ocean-based economic development (Martínez-Vázquez, Milán-García, and de Pablo Valenciano, 2021).

The report by the UN shows how various states located in the Indian Ocean are moving towards the blue economy. Kenya focuses on fisheries, aquaculture, transport, tourism, and raw materials in enhancing food security and employment. Seychelles has introduced a Blue Economy Roadmap to diversify its economy and protect marine life, as well as create more employment. Indonesia is developing marine fisheries, transport, tourism, energy, and extractives and putting in place clean production, integrated policies, and Blue Economy pilot zones in Lombok, Anambas, and Tomini Bay. These are examples of how developing and emerging economies can use the blue economy to ensure sustainability in growth. However, Pakistan is not a member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) because of India's opposition, which impairs its engagement in organised regional integration and access to the common dividends of the blue economy (Gill and Iqbal, 2021).

One of the most apposite examples of multi-country co-operation between all levels of governance (i.e., government, civil society, and the private sector) in the Indian Ocean is the Northern Mozambique Channel Initiative. It sees a future when, by 2050, its people and economies are thriving in a blue economy that is rooted in natural and cultural values. The initiative includes an integrated maritime policy that utilises marine spatial planning and adopts sustainable standards in critical sectors such as oil and gas. Each nation will be assisted in establishing multi-stakeholder platforms based on the coordination of marine and coastal resources (Lee, Noh, and Khim, 2020). The project provides a local road map to Pakistan and other Arabian Sea riparian's, showing how they can unlock mutual benefits through a shared transition to the blue economy. The report by the UN points out that the EU Blue Economy is the most developed, and this is due to its indicators of the Blue Economy capturing socio-economic impacts. The EU approach merges policies governing the maritime and farming sectors into one large policy (Llewellyn, English, and Barnwell, 2016).

The 2020 EU Blue Economy Report includes not only traditional activities (fisheries and aquaculture, ports and shipping, renewable energy, and coastal tourism) but also innovative or less developed activities (ocean energy, offshore hydrogen, biotechnology and

desalination, submarine cables, and maritime defence) (Chassot et al., 2019). In 2018, mature industries had almost 5 million workers with a turnover of over 750 billion and a GVA of over 218 billion. Da- to come: Emergent industries are strong in potential, with the EU in the lead in renewable ocean energy (70% of all world power generated through wave and tidal tools). Maritime defence deals with 177,000, and algae in the bioeconomy have more than 350 million turnover (Garza-Gil, Varela-Lafuente, and Pérez-Pérez, 2021). Sustainable management of marine natural capital is a key to the attainment of the UN 2030 SDGs. This is supported by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, which focuses on climate change, pollution, loss of biodiversity, and other threats – the EU approach is thus a model globally as far as blue economy governance is concerned. The cases in the Indian Ocean also demonstrate that shifting toward a vision of Pakistan as a landmass that is part of the ocean economy would help Pakistan provide sustainable ecosystem services and achieve the UN 2030 SDGs. The most important processes are regional and economic advancement, sustainable oceanic administration, sustenance, employment, and protection of ocean natural capital (Ruijs, Heide, and Berg, 2018).

The blue economy should be seen as both traditional industries (fisheries, aquaculture, renewable energy, ports, shipping, and tourism) and blossoming industries. Portfolios contained in the blue economy include ocean energy, offshore hydrogen, marine biotechnology, marine minerals, desalination, submarine cables, and maritime defence. In Pakistan, the priority actions include developing human capital by means of universities and industry training, applying new technologies, and developing blue demonstration zones to pilot sustainable practices (Ebarvia, 2016). Achieving SDG 14 is one of the biggest challenges in Pakistan, which needs geo-economic reforms in the context of the NSP. Germany and the EU deal with this by means of the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership, which is a union of 25 states as part of the European Green Deal. In its agenda offerings, it focuses on ocean surveillance, ecosystem conservation, resilient coastal communities, clean innovation, safe food, and marine security. The collaboration helps blend science, industry, and governance to solve the problems of biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate change. In the case of Pakistan, the lesson is that of expediency: it needs to establish enabling conditions of a blue economy and to attract industrialised partners. A union of the blue economy within the Arabian Sea region could elevate the collaborative resilience and futures (Jahanzaib and Khan, 2024).

GERMAN-PAKISTANI ENGAGEMENT FOR REGIONAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

According to the Centre of Blue Economy, it is the economic role, and hence the sustainability and growth potential, of the oceans. Pakistan has no explicit blue economy policy beyond the CPEC Sino-Pak partnership and NSP statement on the need to develop a maritime policy. The approaches promoted in Germany focus on climate and ocean protection, but the blue economy itself is not explicitly mentioned. A Pakistan-Germany collaboration has the potential to develop a sustainable and climate-neutral blue economy that generates employment opportunities for coastal populations, the preservation of ecosystems, and innovation. Capacity building of the Pakistani decision-makers and collaboration would make the NSP correspond to the German NSS and PGIP, thus

stabilising the region in the case of Pakistan and presenting Germany with a strategic position in the Indo-Pacific (Swati, Mashwani, and Raza, 2024). The four major GIZ works in Pakistan are in climate change, energy transition, social protection, and economic development. Although it is yet to be active in the blue economy, GIZ reinforces the relevance of the blue economy to SDGs and recommends reform, funding, and participatory management of the ocean. It recommends marine protection, nature-based solutions, sustainable fishing, and aquaculture that help to connect climate, people, and economy. The blue economy in Pakistan can also be considered underdeveloped, but German entrepreneurs have access to opportunities. The German Emirates Chamber of Commerce and Industry and GTAI point out the large number of consumers, untapped sectors, and growth potential, whereas the blue economy is not among the main areas of focus.

STRENGTHS / OPPORTUNITIES	WEAKNESSES / THREATS
Market with around 236 million inhabitants	Critical security situation
Young dynamic population	High import dependency
High number of employees	Shortage of skilled workers, low labour productivity
English as a business language	Insufficient power supply
Relatively deregulated market, open for investment	The digitization process is still in its infancy
Opportunities	Threats
Growing markets, many sectors are barely developed	After-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy
Growing middle class	Difficult legal enforcement
Expansion and modernization of the industry	Difficult political relations with India and Afghanistan
High investments as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor	Natural disasters (floods, earthquakes)
Infrastructure requires investment	Low currency reserves

Table: SWOT Analysis of Pakistan

CONCLUSION

The NSS and PGIP expect Germany to reinforce its presence in a turbulent neighbourhood by supporting mutual gain through an international rules-based order, whereas the NSP focuses on the transformation of Pakistan through the sustainable development of its marine and coastal economy, establishing it as a regional blue economy powerhouse. The realisation of these objectives would further promote peace, stability, and even possible arms control and allow Pakistan to become an economic, not security-centred, regional power. The advantage to Germany of a partnership with Pakistan would be access to China, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, and possibly India to increase trade and energy supply as well as market needs. Possessing the greatest local capacity and with growing interest in green and blue economy transitions in Pakistan, Germany can also become a pioneer in frameworks there. The effective change should be long-term, and this should be directed at the congruence of the need, ability, and willingness to change, but mostly on the human commitment to change.

Cooperation in the political realm would allow Germany and Pakistan to contribute to the security and stability of the global realm in pursuit of a new world order through mutual commitment to international law and multilateralism, as Pakistan joins IORA and

Germany advocates for UN reform. The implications of aligning the German perspectives on the Indo-Pacific region with the policy of the Pakistani National Security lie in the possibility of drawing workable roadmaps to both economic prosperity and environmentally orientated change, where the blue economy may become a central point of German technology transfer, environmentally minded infrastructure, and less restrictive trading strategies, assuming that Pakistan focuses on management restructuring, biodiversity preservation, and climate resiliency. In the science sector, the development of strategies and policies should rely upon the present efforts by anchoring them in transversal integration of the various domains of action, open to new synergies. Industry-specific development practices are also becoming a thing of the past in the age of AI-driven technologies; integrating the emerging power of AI can offer the analytical assistance required to identify inter-sectoral synergies and can allow quicker, more efficient, and resource-efficient implementation of policy.

WAY FORWARD

Climate protection is known worldwide, but marine and coastal protection is slow, and the concept of the blue economy is still in the making beyond the expert world. In Pakistan, some scholars have been quick to embrace sustainability in connecting it with the UN SDGs, but most others associate the blue economy with coastal socio-economic development. Although the Ministry of Maritime Affairs works on an integrated maritime policy with the adoption of SDGs, it is only a matter of time before the strategies of transforming the mature businesses and implementing new blue ones are ready. A deeper intention to change, combined with the alignment of national interests and sustainable goals, is needed to enable large-scale transformation in Pakistan because the German cooperation, notably GIZ, facilitates specific projects only. In the case of Germany, which is resourceless, energy, trade, and resources can only be secured in the long term through diversification and geostrategic resourcing cooperation. Development in the coastal Pakistani regions would not only lessen their financial dependence and enhance connectivity in the region in terms of connectivity but also act as a European hub to Central Asia, China, and other regions. These are possibilities of natural gas procurement, the industrial cluster, and cooperation with the green/blue industry. In the long term, German-Pakistani cooperation will promote regional stability and, with joint blue standards, contribute to the Arabian Sea being an ecologically sustainable and economically connected region.

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