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Foreword

How does economic growth look like today?

Manuela Epure, Editor-in-chief

The world economy is still recovering after the ‘big crisis’, whose effects are visible in many industries, thus making the investors more cautious about new projects.

At the regional level, the European Union has developed an ambitious strategy for the coming decades. EU’s growth plan aims to deliver a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, focused on five goals in the areas of employment, education, innovation, poverty reduction and climate/energy.

It is obvious that the economic sector should play a major role in achieving the strategic goals and, also, it is vital to ensure a policy framework, able to create an effective system of economic governance.

Recent studies¹ have nevertheless shown that it is time to explore new directions to generate economic growth, such as the Ocean Economy. It seems that new ocean- based industries are not only highly profitable but their development is not free of risks and uncertainty, as there is a major need of innovations in science and technology, along with significant investments. The orientation toward the Ocean Economy facing the year of 2030 comes with environmental implications and a unpredictable impact on ocean ecosystems. There is no doubt that a balance between benefits and environmental consequences should be created, by a careful examination of each new development in this sector. The contribution to the green growth can be surely significant, but there are considerable implications for planning and regulation.

The Oceans Economy encompasses a sustainable economy for the ocean-based marine environment, related biodiversity, ecosystems, species and genetic resources, including marine living organisms (from fish and algae to micro-organisms) and natural resources in the seabed, while ensuring their sustainable use and, hence, conservation. The value of the global ocean-based

¹ OECD project - The Future of Ocean Economy, available at <http://www.oecd.org/futures/oceaneconomy.htm>



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economy is estimated between USD 3 and 6 trillion per year, while more than 3 billion people rely on the oceans for their livelihood².

Doing business today seems to be very challenging, not only because one need to manage the crisis, but also in terms of flexibility and orientation towards new forms of economic growth.

Scholars should play a decisive role in supporting business, the applied research should be turned towards providing a solid backup for innovative business initiatives. Similarly, they should be delivering tools able to support companies to evaluate their current status and to reveal the opportunities for growth while avoiding major risks.

Interesting papers tackling these issues were selected to be part of JEDEP volume 5, Issue 2, since each paper introduced interesting perspectives, from crisis management and measuring company's performances to business models and simulation of marketing budget in the Brazilian companies.

You are all invited to read the articles, all with open access, thanks to our commitment to support EU's Initiative on Open Science Policy.

Manuela Epure

Editor-in-chief

² UNCTAD estimations – retrieved at <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-and-Environment/Oceans-Economy.aspx>