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Africa Intelligent Corridors 2030

PORT LOUIS

Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor

Port economy • Ocean development
Governance • Diplomacy



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Logistics and Trade Architect

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AFRICA INTELLIGENT CORRIDORS 2030

PORT LOUIS

Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor

The Custodial Ocean Economy: port activity, ocean development, governance and diplomacy

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Logistics and Trade Architect

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This strategic city monograph connects the national gateway, maritime enterprise and ocean development through accountable institutions and reciprocal regional relationships. The author’s related works are identified in the source guide.

Evidence, Government proposals, reported negotiations and authorial illustrations retain distinct status. The baseline is 15 October 2026, with selected sources rechecked on 16 October. The text neither establishes feasibility nor confers public authority.

The original cover is retained. The twelve figures have been redrawn as readable vector diagrams, preserving their analytical purpose; figures and tables are integrated with the narrative. Every page is A4 portrait. The full manuscript, source architecture and index are retained, with page references rebuilt for this edition.

Contents

Figures . . . 3
Tables . . . 3
Abbreviations . . . 4
Prologue The key and the star . . . 4
Reading the monograph . . . 5
Sources and method . . . 6
Part One The city formed by the sea . . . 7
1 The harbour and the capital . . . 7
Part Two The gateway that must hold . . . 13
2 The national gateway and landlord port . . . 13
3 The way port in a competitive ocean . . . 16
Part Three Connections that create value . . . 20
4 A regional fleet and the Blue Corridor . . . 20
5 The economic system of a custodian city . . . 23
6 From maritime transactions to productive enterprise . . . 30
Part Four The productive and governed ocean . . . 36
7 Ocean industries and Blue Special Economic Zones . . . 36
8 Governing and negotiating the shared sea . . . 46
Part Five The institutions that make it endure . . . 54
9 Port Louis and Ébène . . . 54
10 People, time and the Port Louis Compact . . . 58
Epilogue An ocean city by choice . . . 67
Appendix A The proposed economic system at a glance . . . 68
Appendix B How the source architecture enters the monograph . . . 70
Appendix C Evidence and decision register . . . 73
Sources and reading guide . . . 75
Glossary . . . 79
About the author . . . 80
Subject index . . . 81

Figures

Figure 1. A working port city and custodian . . . 11
Figure 2. The seven Strategic Gates . . . 13
Figure 3. The landlord port and its operating interfaces . . . 16
Figure 4. An ocean hinterland, built through useful connections . . . 21
Figure 5. The round trip must pay . . . 23
Figure 6. The Port Louis Gateway and Ocean Economy . . . 24
Figure 7. From producer to payment . . . 33
Figure 8. Ocean development as a productive system . . . 41
Figure 9. A port-anchored Blue Special Economic Zone . . . 46
Figure 10. A governed ocean, from source to sea . . . 49
Figure 11. Ocean diplomacy earned through use . . . 51
Figure 12. Two distinct cities, one productive relationship . . . 58

Tables

Table 1. The productive geography of the port city . . . 9
Table 2. The seven Strategic Gates of Port Louis . . . 11
Table 3. Regional ports and alternative routings . . . 17
Table 4. Port Louis opportunities and their evidence tests . . . 17
Table 5. Port functions and domestic productive yield . . . 19
Table 6. The five productive circuits of Port Louis . . . 24
Table 7. How the economic frameworks fit together . . . 26
Table 8. The enterprise capability ladder . . . 28
Table 9. Illustrative round trip economics . . . 31
Table 10. Evidence across the three worked cases . . . 34
Table 11. Four value chains for a port anchored Blue SEZ . . . 43
Table 12. Tests for a first Blue SEZ prototype . . . 44
Table 13. Maritime law and arbitration pathways . . . 53
Table 14. Options for strengthening specialist legal capacity . . . 54
Table 15. The first decade Port Louis Compact . . . 65
Table 16. Evidence for investment and implementation decisions . . . 66
Table 17. The six economic operating layers . . . 68
Table 18. The Blueprint’s ten growth engines . . . 69
Table 19. Relationship to the Strategic Blueprint . . . 70
Table 20. Policy instruments and their treatment in the monograph . . . 72
Table 21. Evidence and decision register . . . 74

Abbreviations

AIC2030	Africa Intelligent Corridors 2030
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
CHCL	Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd
CRI	Custodial Resilience Index
CY	Calendar year
EDB	Economic Development Board
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EOS	Economic Operating System
ESG	Environmental, social and governance
FY	Financial year
IFC	International Financial Centre
MBEIP	Mauritius Blue Economy Investment Platform
MCT	Mauritius Container Terminal
MIAC	Mauritius International Arbitration Centre
MPA	Mauritius Ports Authority
MRV	Measurement, reporting and verification
MSC	Mediterranean Shipping Company
MSCL	Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SPV	Special purpose vehicle
TEU	Twenty-foot equivalent unit
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
WTO	World Trade Organization

Prologue The key and the star

I grew up hearing Mauritius described as the key and star of the Indian Ocean. It was a familiar phrase long before I asked what it might demand of us. A key opens; a star helps someone navigate. Years spent working across African ports, corridors and investment environments changed how I heard it. When I returned to Mauritius in January 2026, I began asking what the island could offer the world on its own terms, and what Port Louis could help others build rather than simply receive. [T, pp. 109-112]

My family's history is part of the ocean's history. I am a fourth-generation Mauritian whose ancestors came from India in the nineteenth century. That inheritance gave the Indian Ocean a personal meaning, but it did not give me the right to tell the history of Port Louis through my family alone. This harbour also carries the histories of enslaved people, indentured workers, seafarers, traders and generations whose work kept the city alive. A city monograph must make room for those histories even as I explain the question that brought me back to it. [T, p. 109; H2; H3]

The question I wrote down was direct: what do we seriously have to offer today? I saw three powerful assets that were too often considered separately: the port, the International Financial Centre and the ocean. The port could be a dependable maritime interface. The financial centre had accumulated a reputation for institutional trust. The ocean connected Mauritius to an immense geography of trade, ecology, science and human relationship. The work was to connect port activity and ocean development with the governance and diplomacy they require, supported by capital and professional capability. I wanted to understand where these functions

met, which institutions had lawful authority and what productive capability could result. [T, pp. 109-112; B8, B23]

The question had formed through encounters beyond Mauritius. I had seen port facilities whose wider economic systems were incomplete and investments for which the surrounding trust was too weak. I had also seen the sophistication of Mauritius's financial institutions and asked how capital, logistics, trade and technology might speak to one another in service of African production. The corridor, I realised, does not end at the shoreline. Its ocean connections are part of the same economic life as the inland territories, firms and markets they serve. [T, pp. 36-37, 51-52]

This was the beginning of the Port Louis Blueprint. It was not a claim that Mauritius should own the Indian Ocean's trade. The scale of interdependence and risk across that ocean made ownership an implausible and undesirable ambition. I was looking for a disciplined role that an island state might earn: preserving continuity, building trustworthy interfaces and allowing sovereign partners to cooperate without surrendering their choices. The word that gave the role its limits as well as its purpose was custodianship. [T, pp. 84-85, 111-112; B2]

The book The Africa I See tells this as one part of a larger journey from inherited extraction toward systems of circulation, production and retained value. This monograph brings that vision home to a particular city. It asks what Port Louis has been, what its people and institutions can sustain, and what would have to be true before the title Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor could be earned in practice. The key must open a useful connection for others. The star must remain dependable when the route is uncertain. [T, pp. 57-61, 109-112]

Port Louis brings that question into daily economic life. Cargo, fuel and passengers reach Mauritius through its harbour. Agents, mechanics, processors, traders, public officers and households depend on its reliability for different reasons. A late import affects production and household supply; a missed connection can erase an exporter's market. A regional service matters when it improves a customer's delivered outcome and strengthens the enterprises that make it possible.

The city inherited both the capabilities and the unequal relationships of an imperial port. Its harbour served ships moving around the Cape; enslaved people and indentured workers helped shape the society that grew around it. Those histories give custodianship a demanding contemporary meaning: dependable access, useful enterprise and cooperation whose benefits can be shared. Chapter 1 begins with that formation. [H1-H3]

Reading the monograph

Port Louis can build a distinctive ocean economy by making a limited set of maritime and institutional connections exceptionally dependable. Its small domestic market and absence of a continental land hinterland make selectivity essential. The strategic opportunity lies in services and productive capabilities that customers and sovereign partners choose to use repeatedly. [B8-B10, B23; D]

The argument connects four functions: port continuity, ocean development, ocean governance and ocean diplomacy. Port Louis supplies the maritime, commercial and administrative setting; the Freeport provides logistics value added services and selected transformation. Ébène is the distinct companion city providing capital, risk and professional services. [B3.11, B8-B10, B22-B23]

The original synthesis is the Custodial Ocean Economy. Its operating model, the Port Louis Gateway and Ocean Economy, comprises five productive circuits. Its evaluative principle is Productive Yield: the enduring, reproducible capability left by a call, transaction or ocean use. The model links a paying purpose to reliable service, productive work, independent recourse and renewal. These are propositions to test against costs, alternatives and outcomes. [D; B8-B15]

Custodianship is an obligation to preserve useful connections and the conditions for their renewal. It gives Mauritius no authority over another state's trade, ports or marine space. Partners must retain meaningful choice, productive rights and independent recourse. [B2, B7, B23]

Three distinctions govern the reading. The national gateway has an essential public purpose; regional services must establish their own customer advantage. The proposed CHCL transaction concerns an existing operator; the proposed Island Container Terminal is a separate asset decision. Existing industries provide an operating base; Blue SEZs and other proposed instruments require further evidence and lawful approval. [G1; B18-B23]

The five parts proceed from the city's formation to its gateway, productive connections, ocean industries and enduring institutions. Chapters 5 and 6 explain and test the economic model. Chapter 10 turns the argument into a decision portfolio. The appendices reconcile the source architecture and identify unresolved evidence. Read the forecasts, illustrative cases and proposed institutions according to their stated status. [B; P; D]

Sources and method

This is an interpretive strategic monograph. The Africa I See supplies the author's personal and civilisational perspective; A New Architecture for African Economic Sovereignty sets out the AIC2030 doctrine. The January 2026 Strategic Blueprint and September Institute paper supply the Port Louis proposals. These authorial works establish the argument's provenance; they are not independent empirical validation. Appendix B traces their application in this volume.

Public records provide the independent descriptive anchors. Their financial years, calendar years, definitions and publication dates are retained. Operator websites establish advertised facilities or products, not audited performance. Government announcements establish stated intentions, not completed projects. Reporting on negotiations does not establish executed terms. The worked cases use explicit assumptions rather than measured commercial results.

The method follows a transaction from customer need to productive outcome and compares a feasible alternative. Appraisal requires current quotations, committed demand, supplier and labour costs, lawful access and environmental evidence. The examples explain these tests; they do not validate a route, industry or zone.

The principal evidence baseline is 15 October 2026, with selected public sources rechecked on 16 October. Independent analytical and comparative references [E1-E11] position the argument alongside established research and documented operating experience. They do not validate the proposed routes or institutions. Chapters 2 and 8 retain the dated boundaries on port negotiations and Chagos. Appendix C identifies unresolved decision evidence.

Part One The city formed by the sea

1 The harbour and the capital

A custodian city begins with an honest account of how its harbour, institutions and people came to depend on one another.

Port Louis was formed by ocean position, state purpose and human labour. Position alone was insufficient: a harbour became valuable when provisioning, repair, administration and commerce could work together. Under Mahé de La Bourdonnais in the eighteenth century, the city developed as a naval and shipbuilding centre serving the French colonial system and Cape-routed shipping. British rule changed the political frame while preserving the port's importance as an ocean connection. [H1-H2]

Receiving a ship required stores, repair, clearance and a workable relationship between its timetable and the island's needs. The Blueprint interprets this accumulated competence as mastery of flows, institutional density and mediation among systems. Those capabilities emerged under unequal colonial conditions. Their contemporary legitimacy depends on reliable service, fair access and accountable decisions. [B2]

Government and commerce gathered around the waterfront because the island's external connections passed through it. Customs, treasury, law and administration became part of the port's economic infrastructure. Imports needed clearance and settlement; enterprises needed recognised rights; disputed deliveries needed recourse. Proximity could shorten the path to a decision, although competence and fair access determined its value. The same arrival could mean a revenue obligation to an official, stock to a merchant, work to a dock worker and essential supply to a household. Port Louis joined those interests through daily public and commercial practice. [H1-H2; B3.11, B5.7]

The harbour also changed technically. New facilities, modern cargo handling and container operations altered the relation between quays and streets. The Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) records the port's transition from the congestion and waiting times associated with the 1970s to modern cargo operations after new facilities came into use in the early 1980s. That history is a reminder that reliability is constructed. It is never simply conferred by a favourable bay. [H1]

Changes in rule and technology left a persistent task: keeping maritime operations, administration and commerce connected. Custodianship is the Blueprint's proposed next expression of that capability. It would earn legitimacy through useful services, transparent public choices and agreements that sovereign partners freely accept. History supplies both capabilities to develop and obligations to confront. [B2, B32]

People through the port

At Trou Fanfaron, the surviving Immigration Depot puts people back into the history of the harbour. Built in 1849, it received workers from India, Eastern Africa, Madagascar, China and Southeast Asia. UNESCO relates the site to almost half a million arrivals from India between 1834 and 1920, including people sent onward to other territories. The surviving steps, hospital block and domestic facilities record how arrival was administered and how labour entered a global plantation economy. A ship's passage was also a family's displacement and the beginning of a new social history. [H3]

Indenture should not be narrated as a simple transition from coercion to freedom. It carried constraints, hierarchies and contested meanings distinct from enslavement. A credible account must preserve those differences and place the histories of labour within the city's streets, neighbourhoods and institutions. The harbour belongs to Mauritius's social history as fully as it belongs to the history of ocean trade.

Merchants, seafarers, officials, artisans and successive migrant communities contributed to an outward-facing civic culture. Languages, religious traditions, food, associations and trading practices made the city an

interpreter between worlds. But the ability to translate does not by itself make a city neutral. There were unequal rights and unequal access to capital. Today's claim to be a trusted intermediary should therefore rest on law, professional standards and explicit partner rights, rather than on a flattering reading of cosmopolitan history. [B2, H2]

The working lives of contemporary Port Louis are part of its productive infrastructure. A container movement depends on planners, equipment operators, maintenance teams, customs officers, truck drivers and freight forwarders whose decisions must fit together. Maritime suppliers add engineers, chandlers, cold-chain technicians and service coordinators. Reliable work creates earnings and experience; repeat contracts can support apprenticeships, better equipment and supplier expansion. Crane rates and vessel turnaround therefore belong alongside safe work, labour relations, retained expertise and progression into more demanding occupations. The Blueprint's human-capital and institutional-memory chapters address the people through whom the physical system reproduces and improves its capability. [B12, B56-B64]

Residents must be able to recognise the benefits of an expanded ocean role. More truck movements, land pressure and public exposure alone would deepen the city’s burden. Transferable skills, stronger firms, resilient supply and better services would make the gains tangible. People who sustain the maritime system must have a credible opportunity to share in its advancement.

The working city and its edge

Port Louis is both a capital and a lived city. A port strategy cannot treat its urban hinterland as empty space awaiting logistics conversion. The waterfront, the Freeport, cargo access, public streets, markets, heritage places and civic institutions make competing demands on finite land. A successful maritime system must make its freight connections work without erasing urban life. This is the city's own test, separate from any question of regional competition. [B8]

The Blueprint's liveable corridor capital requires freight access, viable employment paths, public space, heritage protection and maritime learning to work together. Terminal choices affect transport, land use and coastal resilience beyond the port gate. The city should be able to understand those effects before the scale and location of investment are settled. [B8]

The terminal is largely screened from everyday civic life, yet its failures affect prices and availability across Mauritius. Public reporting should make service reliability, disruption response and investment exposure intelligible without disclosing confidential commercial records. A clearer account would let citizens assess how the harbour serves the country.

At the harbour-city edge, development meets a landscape already carrying obligations. Aapravasi Ghat is part of Trou Fanfaron's working environment. Its setting has been altered by transport infrastructure, and UNESCO identifies development in its buffer zone as a conservation vulnerability. New freight access and waterfront projects therefore enter an existing history of competing uses. Their effects on heritage, workers' access and public space belong in the appraisal alongside berth and yard capacity. [H3]

Port Louis already has a local development argument to build upon. The 2017 Port Louis 2030 plan places the historic centre within a wider urban landscape: the Central Market, Chinatown, Company Garden, Citadel and Caudan Waterfront, extending beyond the Aapravasi Ghat buffer zones. Its authors connect heritage preservation and adaptive reuse to local economic opportunity. UNESCO's account of the plan's preparation likewise links conservation to benefits for surrounding communities. The ocean strategy should connect with that civic economy: visitor movement, local enterprise and reused buildings can sustain the city while its maritime activities develop. This extends the Blueprint's liveable corridor capital through a documented Port Louis planning tradition. [H4-H5; B8]

In The Africa I See , the port-city relationship is described as a matter of sovereignty expressed through the community that depends on the port. That claim sharpens the monograph's urban question. Port performance is sustained by trust between institutions and workers, by the city's ability to live with freight activity, and by a public understanding of whose livelihood the harbour serves. A concession may improve cranes and berths while leaving those relationships weak. The terms of ownership, labour, public access and urban development should therefore be judged together with operational performance. This is an interpretation from the author's experience across African port cities; its application to Port Louis requires the city's own evidence and voices. [T, pp. 69-71]

The public record lets us name an initial productive geography. At Trou Fanfaron are fish-handling facilities and the harbour's older working edge; at Terminal I, repair facilities include the Taylor Smith dry docks. At Mer Rouge and the container-side Freeport zones are CHCL, Freeport operators, cold storage, marine services and ship repair. The wider port takes wheat, cement, petroleum, containers, fish and cruise visitors through different facilities and risk systems. MPA identifies 16 wheat silos with a combined capacity of 40,000 tonnes adjacent to discharge, private cement storage and bagging facilities, and the ship-repair facilities of Taylor Smith and Chantier Naval de l'Océan Indien. These are not interchangeable plots awaiting a single hub project. They are working interfaces with separate customers and physical constraints. [O5, O11-O13]

The harbour's productive geography has grown through different industries. Taylor Smith's repair activity at Terminal I sits within a business history that MPA dates to 1857. Princes Tuna's published history traces its roots to a fishing and canning operation established in 1972; its 2015 merger with Thon des Mascareignes brought Marine Road and Riche Terre into the enlarged business. Repair and food manufacturing already demonstrate two ways in which maritime access becomes work ashore. Their next stage depends on technical competence, reliable supplies and customer demand, rather than on a common waterfront label (Table 1). [O12, O18]

Table 1. The productive geography of the port city

Existing activity and the value a city economic account should trace

Productive geography	Existing public-record activity	What a city economic account should trace
Outer harbour and bunkering interfaces	Passing vessels, fuel deliveries by barge or at berth, agency and supplies	Service bundles, time, imported fuel content, local technical work and safety costs
Terminal I and Trou Fanfaron	Fishing quays, repair docks, vessel services and heritage-facing urban edge	Fish handling and quality, repair skills, workers' access and compatible public space
Terminal II and bulk interfaces	Wheat, cement, petroleum and other national supply chains	Reliability and stock resilience, processing linkages, storage, risk and downstream price effects
Mauritius Container Terminal and Mer Rouge	Container handling, Freeport facilities, depots, workshops and cold storage	Access, connection reliability, supplier contracts, firm upgrading and any CHCL transaction effects

Table 1. The productive geography of the port city

Existing activity and the value a city economic account should trace

Productive geography	Existing public-record activity	What a city economic account should trace
Port Louis waterfront and city	Cruise arrivals, professional services, markets, labour and civic institutions	Visitor and crew spending, locally owned firms, walkable links and the cost of freight-city conflict
Ébène and other national nodes	Finance, insurance, law, data and enterprise support outside the harbour	Which specific port or ocean transactions gain finance or recourse, and which remain unserved

Source: Author’s synthesis of MPA public records and the city economic argument. [O5, O11-O14, O18; D]

The published MPA master-plan summary covers 2015-2040 and provides historical planning context. The later terminal proposals require their own site, design and commercial account. Chapter 2 distinguishes the existing container terminal, the earlier authorial concept and the Government's subsequent proposal. Current plans, surveys and concession documents are needed before assigning berths, roads, land or public costs. [O5, O14, G1; B17; P5-P6]

The city economy is made in the connections between these activities. A fish landing becomes a sale when inspection, cold storage, processing, export documentation and an onward service meet a buyer's conditions. A crew change can support transport, accommodation and professional work when port clearance and the airport connection fit the vessel's timetable. Wheat arriving through a silo supports national supply and the businesses that turn it into food. A technician's repair can create skilled earnings and repeat demand even when its invoice is smaller than a gross fuel sale. These relationships connect waterfront activity with workshops, offices, suppliers and households. Their productive value lies in the work performed, the capability retained and the costs borne where delay or environmental burdens occur. [O4, O11-O13]

Follow a working day and the development priorities become clear. A repair technician needs vessel access and suitable equipment. A processor needs timely inspection and reliable refrigeration. A supplier needs orders, working capital and prompt payment. Workers need safe travel; residents need usable streets and public services. Port investment should improve these connections alongside performance inside the terminal. [B8, B12; O4-O5, O12-O13]

Port Louis also needs a civic account of who gains from change. New technical work may benefit a supplier while altered access harms another business; improved freight reliability may help households while a poorly located facility increases local exposure. A credible urban account would connect employment and supplier opportunities to freight access, public space, heritage, environmental effects and the costs borne by users. Residents, workers and enterprises should be able to inform those choices through the competent public processes. The liveable corridor capital in the Blueprint is an economic proposition: a city able to sustain the people and institutions on which its maritime role depends. [B8.10, B12.10-B12.14; P18]

Figure 1. A working port city and custodian

OCEAN INTERFACE

Cargo and vessel calls; fuel, repairs and crews; lawful marine uses, science and stewardship.

WORKING HARBOUR

MPA provides common assets and port regulation. Terminal I, Terminal II and the existing MCT have distinct functions. CHCL is an operator.

PORT CITY

Freeport services, suppliers, processors and markets connect the harbour to work. Public institutions, heritage and usable streets sustain the city.

ÉBÈNE

The separate companion city supplies capital, risk, legal, technology and professional services through authorised actors.

FOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Port continuity; ocean development; ocean governance; ocean diplomacy.

NATIONAL GATEWAY AND URBAN LIFE

Reliable essential supply and export access must coexist with workers' access, Aapravasi Ghat, public space and a liveable waterfront.

PRODUCTIVE YIELD

Reliable supply, stronger firms and skills, partner benefit and a healthy sea.

Functional relationships, not a site plan. The proposed 50-hectare Island Container Terminal is a separate asset proposal. Sources: chapters 1, 2, 8 and 9; MPA [O5, O11-O13, O17]; UNESCO [H3].

Seven strategic gates of the port city

The seven Strategic Gates identify where important flows meet decisions: maritime movement, public authority, capital, commerce, people, identity and culture, and information. At each gate, the analysis asks who has lawful authority or practical influence, where value is created and retained, and what capability endures. The gates locate decisions; the five productive circuits in chapter 5 organise the activities those decisions affect. This is a city-specific diagnostic within AIC2030, distinct from the metropolitan commercial use of gates in the Lagos work (Table 2). [B3, B8; D]

Table 2. The seven Strategic Gates of Port Louis

Gate	Flow and decision rights	Value pathway	Outcome to examine
Maritime	Cargo, vessels and services; port, carrier and operator mandates	Safe access, reliable calls, technical and Freeport services	Supply continuity and repeatable maritime capability
Government	Authority, permissions and public resources; competent state institutions	Predictable rules, fair access and disciplined investment	Trust, accountability and effective public service
Capital	Finance and risk; regulated lenders, investors, insurers and public bodies	Funding for viable firms, vessels and ocean activity	Productive assets, sound risk allocation and reinvestment
Commercial	Orders, goods and enterprise relationships; producers, traders and buyers	Preparation, transformation, fulfilment and distribution	Stronger firms and better outcomes at origin and destination

Table 2. The seven Strategic Gates of Port Louis

Gate	Flow and decision rights	Value pathway	Outcome to examine
Human	People, skills and mobility; employers, educators and lawful authorities	Training, decent work, enterprise and specialist knowledge	Transferable capability and wider opportunity
Identity and culture	Heritage, public space and belonging; communities and custodial institutions	A working waterfront with memory, access and civic value	Shared stewardship without erasing distinct histories
Narrative and information	Facts, records, research and public debate; plural independent actors	Reliable evidence and a more informed national choice	Decisions that can be challenged, learned from and improved

Source: Author’s Strategic Gates framework. [B3, B8; D]

Consider an illustrative seafood order, not a documented contract. A landing and sailing window engage the maritime gate; inspection and lawful access engage the government gate. A processor's agreed cold handling or quality work engages the commercial gate, and the people who perform it engage the human gate. Working capital and insurance engage the capital gate. Effects on the historic waterfront and coastal users engage identity and culture; reliable public records of labour, product quality and ecological effects engage the information gate. The test is an accepted product and paid buyer, fair earnings at origin and in Mauritius, transferable skills and sustainable marine use. No single actor governs the whole chain. [B8-B12, D]

A seafood order crosses several gates without placing the whole chain under one actor. Its success is an accepted product, a paid producer, useful work in Mauritius and capability that survives the order. The following chapters test that proposition through vessel calls, regional cargo, ocean ventures and institutions. [D]

Port Louis’s wider economic role also has a scholarly precedent. Notteboom and Rodrigue’s port-regionalisation argument locates port development within logistics integration and networks beyond the traditional perimeter. This monograph applies that wider functional perspective to a different geography: an island gateway whose regional connections cross sovereign seas. Its specific proposition is the combination of national continuity, voluntary ocean connections and retained capability. The established literature supports looking beyond the quay; the effectiveness of this particular custodial arrangement remains a question for evidence. [E10]

Figure 2. The seven Strategic Gates

Strategic Gate	Decision interface	Outcome to test
Maritime	MPA, operators and carriers connect cargo, calls and services.	Reliable supply and maritime capability.
Government	Competent bodies govern rules, permissions, public resources and recourse.	Accountable institutions and dependable public service.
Capital	Authorised banks, insurers and investors allocate and price finance.	Viable investment, sound risk allocation and reinvestment.
Commercial	Producers, buyers and firms agree products, services and market terms.	Repeat orders, retained value and stronger partner firms.
Human	Employers, workers, educators and authorities shape work, skills and mobility.	Transferable capability, careers and fair participation.
Identity and culture	Communities and competent bodies safeguard heritage and public space.	Shared inheritance and a liveable port city.
Narrative and information	Independent research, media and disclosure make choices open to scrutiny.	Institutional memory and better-informed decisions.

THE GATES WORK TOGETHER

Transactions connect the gates; lawful decision rights remain distributed. Ébène supports capital and confidence without absorbing Port Louis's maritime mandates.

Create, transform, retain, circulate, reinvest and compound value. Authorial diagnostic, not a measured index. Sources: chapters 1 and 9; [B3, B8; D].

Part Two The gateway that must hold

2 The national gateway and landlord port

The first measure of this city is whether Mauritius can continue to obtain and export what it needs through an open, reliable gateway.

Food, fuel, productive inputs and exports require a gateway the country can rely on. National continuity is the first obligation in the Blueprint and draft policy. Regional transshipment is a further commercial opportunity whose customers, economics and public value must be established separately. A hub strategy should strengthen the essential gateway and disclose any competing demands on its capacity. [B7; P6; I]

A vessel call has economic value through the chain it completes. An importer needs scheduling, berth availability, customs release, inland delivery and financing to fit together. An exporter needs a service aligned with production and the buyer's deadline. A manufacturer depends on arriving inputs; a trader needs stock available for sale; households depend on dependable essential supplies. Under disruption, public institutions must protect continuity while respecting other users' rights. The port is consequently infrastructure, a service network and public capability supporting economic life across Mauritius. Port Louis concentrates the maritime and administrative connections through which that national role is performed.

The Blueprint's port typology distinguishes mega hubs that concentrate volumes, gateways that join hinterlands to maritime networks, system ports that provide sequencing and service depth, and elevated ports that add trusted governance and capital interfaces. It proposes Port Louis as an elevated port whose wider role rests on a competent national gateway. [B15]

Red Sea disruption and Cape diversion show why exceptional traffic should not become a permanent demand assumption. Terminal forecasts and concession appraisals must separate domestic gateway requirements, durable regional business and calls sensitive to rerouting. The Institute paper’s return toward the 2024 level and carrier-specific shifts are scenarios for testing exposure, not forecasts. [B2; I]

Continuity rests on maintenance, depth, equipment uptime, cargo release, usable data and clear operating rules. These determine whether a shipper can trust a timetable. Under stress, the same chain has to handle changed routes, insurance conditions and equipment shortages. Resilience extends from the berth through finance and the interpretation of obligations. [B28, B54; P15]

Landlord assets and live decisions

MPA's existing landlord role provides the institutional foundation for Port Louis's maritime offering. It supplies principal port infrastructure and superstructure, marine services and navigation aids, and regulates activity and environmental matters in designated port areas. Historical reform separated this public role from CHCL cargo handling under concession contracts. The city question is how port land, common access, operational rights and investment can support national continuity, competitive services and a wider productive maritime economy. [O17; H1]

Different port functions call for different rights. A container terminal requires a tested forecast, berths, yard capacity, productivity duties and non-discriminatory access. Ship repair requires suitable water and workshops, safety and environmental controls, and enough customers for specialised skills. Bunkering, seafood handling, cruise facilities and Freeport activity have other customers and risk profiles. Their licences, leases, service contracts and concessions should not be collapsed into one standard template. For each asset the public authority should know the use of land and common infrastructure, who funds and maintains it, the permitted term and exclusivity, tariffs and access, labour and supplier opportunities, performance and environmental duties, and remedies if an operator fails. The economic test is whether those rights attract competent service and leave stronger firms and a more reliable gateway, rather than merely a rent receipt. [B8, B15-B17, B27; P4-P6; O5, O17]

The landlord boundary is also important. A port concession may govern a quay or related facility; it does not grant rights over an offshore fishery, aquaculture site, biological resource or another state's port. Those require the competent authorities, laws, users and ecological safeguards applicable to each space. Freeport processing and a proposed port-anchored Blue Special Economic Zone (Blue SEZ) may connect economically to a terminal without inheriting MPA's statutory functions or a terminal operator's commercial rights. This separation lets the landlord port assemble useful interfaces while keeping ocean development and regional cooperation within their proper mandates. [B9-B10, B23; P5, P9, P14]

The January 2026 Blueprint proposed a transshipment and feeder function; the accompanying draft policy assumed an indicative 35-hectare new terminal. The Government’s March statement describes a different Island Container Terminal: approximately 50 hectares, a 1.2 kilometre quay and an estimated Rs 47.3 billion cost. This later proposal replaces the earlier area assumption in the present analysis. The existing Mauritius Container Terminal, described by MPA as 35 hectares, is a separate facility. Demand, design, phasing, environmental effects, finance and concession terms still require appraisal. [B17; P5-P6; G1; O5]

CHCL’s shareholding is a separate decision. In March, the Government recorded a recommendation for Maersk and MSC to acquire up to 40 per cent, subject to procurement and competition law. September reporting described advanced negotiations, a 60 per cent State holding and a possible Maersk management role.

The public evidence cited here does not establish signed terms, valuation, the carriers' internal split or final management powers. An interest in CHCL would not, by itself, allocate rights in the proposed Island Container Terminal. [G1; R1-R2]

Shareholding alone does not establish control or public value. Management powers, reserved matters, access and tariff rules, commercial-data protections, labour terms and enforceable service commitments determine the bargain. Independent competition and public-interest scrutiny should test those terms before signature. A dependable, accessible national gateway is the governing public objective. [G1; R1-R2; I]

The World Bank's 2025 Port Reform Toolkit provides an independent reference for this distinction. Its governance, private-participation and economic-regulation modules treat commercial autonomy, public accountability, access and competition as related but separate design questions. For Port Louis, a minority share sale is therefore only one component of reform. The public case must identify which service failure it addresses and how contracts and regulatory capacity protect users. This is an application of the Toolkit's framework, rather than evidence that the proposed CHCL terms already meet it. [E1]

Area and nominal capacity cannot establish an investment case. Forecast demand, achievable productivity and design capacity answer different questions. The immediate choice is which observed bottlenecks can be removed within existing assets and which require construction. Capital should follow a tested network, engineering and public-interest case, with phasing that limits exposure if demand changes. [B17, B27; I]

A landlord account should show the assets serving national continuity, services winning paying customers, common access, labour and supplier opportunities, and remaining public expenditure or environmental liability. It places CHCL's shareholder and management terms within the wider port offering and keeps the new terminal's asset and concession appraisal distinct. The economic purpose is a dependable gateway and stronger maritime enterprises. [B17, B27; P4-P6; I]

Figure 3. The landlord port and its operating interfaces

PUBLIC LANDLORD: MAURITIUS PORTS AUTHORITY

Port planning, common infrastructure, marine access, safety, regulation and concession oversight operate within applicable statutory powers.

EXISTING GATEWAY

Terminal I serves old-port and fishing functions; Terminal II has multipurpose quays; Terminal III contains the existing 35-hectare MCT. CHCL supplies cargo handling under its rights.

MARITIME SERVICES

Fishing, bunkering, repair and passenger activities need their own licences, leases or service rights, with clear maintenance and environmental duties.

PROPOSED TERMINAL

The approximately 50-hectare Island Container Terminal requires separate demand, engineering, environmental, financing and concession appraisal.

CHCL PARTICIPATION

The proposed carrier entry of up to 40% concerns an existing operator. Test valuation, management powers, service commitments, access, labour and data protections.

NEW ASSET DECISION

A CHCL shareholding does not itself confer ownership or operating rights in the new terminal. Establish the asset, risk and concession case independently.

EACH OPERATING RIGHT

Define use and term, funding and upkeep, fair access, performance, labour and ecology, reporting and remedies.

MANDATE BOUNDARY

A port concession grants no offshore resource right, authority over partner ports or statutory power to a Freeport or Blue SEZ.

Test continuity, access, capability and public exposure separately. Sources: chapter 2; [O5, O17; G1; R1-R2; E1]. Transaction status follows the dated evidence in the text.

3 The way port in a competitive ocean

A vessel already passing the island can buy useful services here. Port Louis earns that call through time, technical quality and total cost against another feasible stop.

Port Louis faces alternatives with established services and improving infrastructure. Port Réunion's authority reports 370,433 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) for calendar 2025 and describes an Indian Ocean distribution role. At Toamasina, Japan's embassy records the partial handover of 333 metres of the new C4 quay on 21 March 2026, with a reported depth of 16 metres. This is evidence of physical progress, without establishing full project completion or a particular shipping service. Colombo and Salalah also provide long-distance network alternatives. Port Louis must earn a role within that changing geography through a specific delivered advantage. [O20-O21, O24-O25]

Ports can compete for business while cooperating on standards, safety and continuity. The Blueprint’s regional role must remain useful as partner gateways improve. A Mauritian connection is durable only if its customer advantage survives that improvement. [B2.8, B2.14, B53]

The relevant comparison depends on the transaction. For a Malagasy exporter, direct shipment through Toamasina or a relay through Port Réunion may compete with a Port Louis connection. Colombo's authority describes connections among Europe, Asia, the Gulf and East Africa; Salalah positions itself on major

intercontinental routes. These port descriptions establish network roles, not a quoted alternative for every cargo. A Durban, Maputo, Mombasa or Dar es Salaam movement has its own mainland and maritime geography. The table separates these comparisons by function. Which route wins remains a question of available service, delivered cost, reliability and useful work performed along the chain (Table 3). [O20-O21, O24-O25; B16-B18]

Table 3. Regional ports and alternative routings

Network roles and customer alternatives to examine

Alternative	Relevant strength	Question for Port Louis
Port Réunion	Indian Ocean distribution role; 370,433 TEU in CY2025 on its reported basis [O20]	Does the Mauritian schedule and full delivered cost improve a named chain?
Toamasina or direct shipment	Gateway expansion; partial C4 quay handover in March 2026 [O21]	Which preparation step in Mauritius adds value without displacing productive work at origin?
Durban, Maputo, Mombasa and Dar es Salaam	Mainland gateways with their own hinterlands [B16-B18]	Which coastal or island movement benefits from a Mauritian connection?
Colombo and Salalah	Intercontinental connections through Colombo and Salalah [O24-O25]	Does an available Port Louis connection improve the delivered result after extra handling and any detour?

Source: Port authority and public project records, with the author's comparison. [O20-O21, O24-O25; B16-B18]

The possible advantage is a combined offer: a dependable call, technical service, accepted records, a productive Freeport step and credible settlement. Its time, cost and risk saving must exceed any detour and extra handling. A customer and a carrier may reach different judgments; both accounts must work.

The starting judgment is therefore selective. Existing maritime services and seafood transformation offer observable customer interfaces on which to investigate deeper technical and supplier capability. Freeport operations have an advantage only where a buyer values the particular preparation, consolidation, processing or fulfilment step. Regional shipping requires additional proof of directional demand and a workable vessel cycle. Research-intensive ocean industries need longer scientific, regulatory and commercial development. This is a provisional hierarchy of readiness, rather than a ranking of final economic importance (Table 4).

Table 4. Port Louis opportunities and their evidence tests

Opportunity	Potential advantage
Maritime services and repair	Dependable service bundle and technical response
Seafood and selected Freeport work	Transformation, quality and market readiness
Regional short sea network	Schedule reliability and useful onward connection
Ocean science data and future energy	Specialist knowledge and governed access

Repeat purchases, total call cost and time, supplier value added

Buyer acceptance, delivered comparison and retained productive capability

Contracted cargo, directional contribution, cycle and partner terms

Validation, usable rights, customer or offtake demand and staged funding

Source: Author's assessment of opportunity readiness, drawing on the preceding market discussion. [B; D; I]

The offer should be tested against restored Red Sea routings and stronger competing gateways. Skills, accepted records and repeat customers may endure those changes. Temporary shortages elsewhere provide a weaker foundation. Diplomatic cooperation has an economic result when an accepted procedure removes a measured friction in an actual transaction.

UNCTAD's Review of Maritime Transport 2025 places route disruption, higher costs and vulnerable island economies within the same maritime problem. Diversion may create business for a port while raising costs elsewhere. The implication for Port Louis is selective appraisal: test whether a service remains useful under a feasible alternative routing and disclose who pays for resilience. Neither a temporary gain in calls nor a global connectivity measure can establish the profitability of a particular Mauritian service. [E2]

Begin with the shipper's available routes. For an exporter near Toamasina, the comparison includes direct shipment, another hub and Port Louis. Freight, handling, inventory, dwell, spoilage, inspection, insurance and reliability all enter delivered cost. The carrier separately tests the vessel cycle, berth windows, fuel, repositioning and utilisation. A viable connection requires both accounts to work. [I]

A Malagasy producer must be able to see where processing, jobs, rights and revenue accrue, and to choose another route. The Blueprint's Africa-first principle and the draft policy's co-ownership and non-substitution principle make consent material to the commercial design. Mauritian preparation is justified where it improves the producer's delivered outcome and helps capability grow at origin. [B3, B20, P18]

The city earns the title custodian only if the connection remains useful as its partners become more capable.

Vessel services and the way port

Port Louis has more than one customer. An importer needs the island's gateway; a carrier needs a container connection; a ship crossing the ocean may need fuel, water, stores, repairs, a survey or a crew change without carrying a single box for Mauritius. The Mauritius Ports Authority describes Port Louis as a way port on routes linking Asia, Africa and Latin America. It identifies tankers, bulk carriers, oil rigs and other callers, and lists bunkering, stores, crew changes, repair, hull inspection, marine survey, waste management and freshwater supply among the relevant services. This is an existing port function, not an invention of the Blueprint. [O4]

The way-port customer purchases a dependable call: fuel, water, stores, repairs, inspection or crew services within an acceptable time and risk envelope. Imported fuel can dominate gross turnover while retaining little domestic value. Technical services may build more skill and margin from a smaller invoice. Port-volume targets should therefore distinguish the activity being sold and the capability it creates.

The current port already has distinct physical interfaces. MPA identifies Terminal I, including the old port and fishing facilities; Terminal II with multipurpose quays; Terminal III at the Mauritius Container Terminal; private fishing quays, an oil jetty and a cruise jetty. These assets serve different cargoes and customers. Their operating functions provide the starting point for the way-port economy. The separate new-terminal proposal is addressed in chapter 2 (Table 5). [O5; G1]

Table 5. Port functions and domestic productive yield

Port function	Immediate customer and need	Potential domestic productive yield	Principal constraint
National cargo gateway	Mauritian importers and exporters needing dependable access	Supply continuity, export reliability and competent handling firms	Berth, yard, customs and inland reliability
Way port and outer harbour	Passing ships needing fuel, crew, stores, repairs, water or inspection	Marine suppliers, technicians, surveyors, agents and service firms	Turnaround, safety, environmental practice and air links
Container relay	Lines and shippers seeking a reliable connection between services	Handling competence and selected onward services	Carrier concentration, network changes and fair access
Short sea connection	Regional producers, traders and shipowners needing repeat sailingsi	Fleet capability, logistics firms and partner-market access	Directional cargo, vessel cycle and existing alternatives
Fishing and seafood	Fishing fleets, processors and buyers needing safe handling	Cold-chain, processing, standards and marine skills	Resource sustainability, traceability and market demand
Cruise and passenger	Visitors, operators and the city seeking a usable arrival experience	Local services, culture, guiding and urban enterprise	Seasonality, city access and environmental effects

Source: MPA descriptions of port functions and facilities, with the author's economic interpretation. [O4-O6, O11-O15]

Port Louis begins from an operating economy. For financial year 2024/25, MPA reports 9.81 million tonnes of cargo, 496,558 TEU of container traffic and 719,782 TEU of container throughput, the last combining container traffic with outward transshipment including paid restows. It records 4,139 vessel calls, of which 2,992 were refuelling calls, and 58,828 cruise passengers. These measures establish activity at different interfaces; they cannot be added into a single volume or interpreted as a measure of income retained in Mauritius. [O6, printed p. 4]

MPA records 2,497 outer-harbour calls and 1,048,471 tonnes of bunker supply in FY2024/25. It links increased bunkering and crew-change calls to Red Sea rerouting. Growth was uneven: outer-harbour repair or inspection calls fell from 103 to 82. More traffic therefore does not establish growth in every maritime service. The city's opportunity is to build repeat supplier demand that can endure routing changes. [O6, printed pp. 77, 85]

The baseline must connect port activity to production ashore. Repair, processing, storage, handling, agency and professional services already form an enterprise base. Their combined domestic value added, resident income, occupational profile and public exposure are not established here. Without consistent establishment and labour data, an aggregate city contribution or multiplier would be premature.

A useful first account would select a common year and defined geography, separating establishments in Port Louis from connected production elsewhere in Mauritius and partner territories. It would reconcile port records with firm and labour data, record the ownership and import content of each activity, and distinguish recurring demand from disruption-related calls. Confidential information can be collected under independent custodianship and published in aggregates that prevent identification of individual prices or clients. This provides an economic baseline against which later gains can be tested.

The economic yield of the way port depends on the whole call bundle. An agent arranges permissions and services; a bunker supplier mobilises fuel and a barge or pipeline; a ship chandler brings stores; a technician

repairs a defect; a surveyor verifies seaworthiness; crew arrive or depart through an air connection; a waste contractor receives material under applicable rules. Each interface can cause delay or create confidence. The competitive measure is the ship's total time, cost and operational risk compared with another feasible stop. The Mauritian measure is the net value retained after imported inputs, along with skills, repeat business, tax receipts and environmental costs. [O4, O6]

The near-term possibility lies in higher-quality services for ships that already call: faster repairs, reliable provisioning, crew logistics and coordination with fuel supply. A local supplier can grow from an occasional order into a recurring contract, acquire certification, train staff and offer more specialised work. The city gains when that competence serves several customers and survives a change in shipping networks. A passing vessel can change its stop, so supplier development depends on service quality, competitive cost and repeat demand. Tracing purchased service bundles and domestic supplier value would distinguish durable enterprise growth from disruption-related traffic. [B12, B15; O4, O6]

The service bundle also creates public obligations. Fuel handling requires storage safety, spill prevention and clear liability. Crew changes require lawful immigration and health arrangements. Repair and in-water work require environmental controls. Competitive service must operate within those conditions; increased calls alone cannot justify transferring their costs to the public.

A documented comparison: Singapore’s maritime cluster

Singapore’s maritime authority reports that 35 maritime companies opened or expanded operations in 2025, bringing the number of international shipping groups to more than 200. It places this alongside bunkering digitalisation, technical centres and workforce development. The reported annual business spending of around S$5 billion is spending, not domestic value added. The relevant lesson for Mauritius is the combination of customers, specialised services, skills and standards. Singapore’s scale and network position do not supply a forecast for Port Louis; they show why a maritime economy needs an enterprise account alongside its cargo account. [E8]

Part Three Connections that create value

4 A regional fleet and the Blue Corridor

The Blueprint proposes selected sea connections, owned or operated by Mauritian or African firms where commercially viable. Their purpose is to improve the productive relationships on either shore.

Mauritius has no continental land hinterland. The proposed ocean hinterland would be built through selected regional short sea services. Toamasina, Mombasa, Dar es Salaam, Maputo, Durban and island ports are candidate connections with different distances, cargoes and vessel requirements. They do not constitute an announced rotation. A Mauritian or African operator could connect selected cargo through Port Louis where shipping, optional Freeport services and onward distribution improve the customer’s result. Paying demand in both directions remains essential. [B16, B18; I]

Figure 4. An ocean hinterland, built through useful connections

PORT LOUIS: A PROPOSED OCEAN HINTERLAND

Each candidate family needs its own cargo, vessel cycle, partner agreement and commercial case. These are not one rotation or announced operating services.

Candidate family	Ports and partner geography	First commercial test
Madagascar	Toamasina and Port Louis	Paid demand in both directions and producer benefit.
East Africa	Mombasa and Dar es Salaam	A useful connection against existing services.
Southern Africa	Maputo and Durban	Industrial cargo, workable cycle and delivered advantage.
Island services	Réunion, Seychelles and Comoros	Vessel suitability, continuity and explicit cost sharing.

ONE POSSIBLE SERVICE CHAIN

Regional collection; a useful Port Louis connection; optional Freeport preparation; onward distribution. Paying reverse cargo is essential.

COMPARE THE CUSTOMER'S ALTERNATIVES

Direct shipment through Toamasina; Port Réunion for regional relay; Colombo or Salalah for deep-sea connections; mainland services where available.

Schematic of route families, not a geographical map, navigation track or allocation of maritime rights. Mauritian or African fleet participation remains conditional on viability. Sources: chapters 3 and 4; [B16, B18].

A corridor joins production, services and markets through repeatable arrangements; a sailing provides one transport link. Vessel time, fuel, crew, ports, insurance, maintenance and empty equipment must be paid for. Shippers must trust delivery and onward connections. Producers may need certification or refrigeration before a route becomes usable. Infrastructure cannot aggregate these choices by itself. [B18; I]

The Blueprint envisages a private sector led maritime network with a Mauritian or African fleet owner as a possible commercial actor. It uses cabotage in the broader sense of regional coastal connectivity. Legal cabotage rights, however, depend on each state's domestic law; a cross-border service between sovereign ports is described here as regional short sea shipping. Specific domestic rights would need separate legal determination. [B18]

A Madagascar pilot would test both commercial fit and reciprocity. It should start with existing schedules, named products, buyer requirements and contractable volumes. Its model must include directional imbalance, empty equipment, cold-chain and inspection needs, and alternatives to Port Louis. The agreement must identify productive work, rights and earnings retained in Madagascar. Expansion should follow repeat demand; any public support requires a separate purpose, budget and review. [B20; I]

The Mombasa and Dar es Salaam arcs require their own cargo and timetable logic; Maputo and Durban differ again in distance and industrial connections. Island services face smaller volumes and essential-supply obligations. Existing liner and feeder schedules form the commercial counterfactual for every proposed arc. The map records geographic possibilities, not services already operating or a commitment to sail. [B18; I]

The four route families are Madagascar-Mauritius, East Africa, Southern Africa and the island economies. An anchor timetable could be followed by higher utilisation, co-loading and slot exchange where paying demand

supports them. Each family needs a distinct decision on directional cargo, existing services, missed connections, partner benefit and customer willingness to pay. The Blueprint's vessel-size and frequency references require route-specific validation before becoming fleet specifications. [B18]

The most valuable network asset may be the protected connection between a regional sailing and an onward service. A published weekly departure has little value if a feeder regularly misses a deep-sea window or if customs, refrigeration or inspection consumes the transfer time. The route agreement therefore needs more than a vessel: partner-port windows, data exchange, escalation when a call is delayed and a clear commercial allocation of the cost of disruption. These interfaces are also an early subject for ocean diplomacy, because no one port can make a cross-border schedule dependable by acting alone. [B18, B23]

Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd (MSCL) occupies a limited role in the Blueprint and draft policy: helping to establish or stabilise a thin route and preserving continuity during disruption. As demand matures, co-loading, slot exchange or partnership would reduce its direct exposure.

Public support needs a stated purpose, spending ceiling, performance measure, risk bearer and exit condition before a vessel is committed. [B21; P7; I]

Vessels and terminal interfaces must work as one chain. A sound cargo base can still be lost through a missed deep-sea connection, delayed clearance or excessive transfer time. The proposed switchyard function therefore depends on berth windows, equipment, customs, Freeport handling and partner-port coordination. Reliable repetition would create the ocean hinterland. [B17-B19]

Figure 5 introduces the illustrative round-trip calculation developed in chapter 6. Its assumed costs and paid loads explain the service economics without establishing a commercial route.

Figure 5. The round trip must pay

CAPACITY 300 usable TEU per leg; 600 directional slots per completed cycle.	**FIXED COST** Assumed cycle cost: USD 100,000.
NET RECEIPT Assumed operator receipt: USD 500 per paid TEU.	**VARIABLE COST** Assumed load-related cost: USD 100 per paid TEU.

CONTRIBUTION AND BREAK-EVEN

Contribution is USD 400 per paid TEU. Break-even is 100,000 / 400 = 250 paid TEU, or 41.7% of combined directional slots.

Illustrative case	Paid outward / return	Cycle result
Base case	220 / 60	USD 12,000 surplus
Weaker return	220 / 30	Break-even
Fixed cost +20%	220 / 60	USD 8,000 loss

OPERATOR TEST Validate directional rates, empty repositioning, reefer power, weight, missed windows, downtime and the vessels needed for frequency.	**SHIPPER AND PARTNER TEST** Compare delivered cost and reliability with the best route. Establish producer benefit, retained capability and reciprocal terms.

Illustration only. Costs, equal directional rates and paid loads are assumed; results precede tax and excluded risks. These are not observed prices, a vessel specification or a forecast. Source: chapter 6 and Table 9.

5 The economic system of a custodian city

A port call, a shipment and a marine right become an economy only when firms can perform paid work, retain capability, obtain recourse and sustain the conditions for the next cycle.

Port Louis needs an economic model suited to an island gateway. Mombasa’s terrestrial corridor and Lagos’s metropolitan commercial scale provide useful comparisons, but neither can be transferred to Mauritius. National imports, passing-vessel services, ocean uses and cross-border connections create distinct obligations and customers. The Port Louis Gateway and Ocean Economy is the proposed operating model of the Custodial Ocean Economy: maritime access and lawful ocean use generating reproducible services, firms, knowledge and value in Mauritius and willing partner territories. [M; L; B3, B8-B10]

Port activity and ocean development form the economic domains of Port Louis's offering. Maritime connectivity, vessel services and regional shipping connect users to the harbour. Freeport logistics value added services consolidate, store, prepare, transform and distribute selected products. Traders, agents, processors, suppliers and professional firms connect these operations to customers and markets. Ocean development extends the productive field into marine industries, science and specialised services. Ocean governance establishes rights and ecological limits; ocean diplomacy supports dependable cooperation among consenting states, ports and communities. Ébène supplies capital, risk and financial intelligence within this economic relationship, developed in chapter 9 (Table 6). [B3.11, B5.7, B8-B10, B23; P4-P5, P10-P14]

Figure 6. The Port Louis Gateway and Ocean Economy

Productive circuit	What the relationship serves
National gateway	Essential supply, productive inputs and export access.
Way port	Fuel, stores, repairs, crews and other marine services.
Regional network	Selected sea connections and partner-market access.
Port-city transformation	Freeport services, suppliers, manufacturing and urban enterprise.
Governed ocean development	Food, energy, biotechnology, data, science and stewardship.

SIX OPERATING CAPABILITIES

Physical; industrial; trade; digital; capital; governance. The circuits identify activity; the capabilities explain what must function.

THE REPEATABLE ECONOMIC LOOP

Usable flow; dependable service; paid enterprise work; trusted performance; reinvestment. The next cycle should start with stronger firms, skills and partners.

CONTINUITY

Can users rely on service and lawful rights under stress?

CONVERSION

Which firm performs productive work and builds capability?

RECOURSE

Which competent forum offers an independent, usable remedy?

RENEWAL

Do reinvestment and learning sustain people, service and ecology?

PRODUCTIVE YIELD

Enduring, reproducible capability in Mauritius and consenting partner territories, within legal and ecological limits.

Port Louis anchors maritime and public interfaces; Ébène supports capital and confidence; partner territories retain productive agency. Measure movement, value added, income, fiscal exposure, capability and welfare separately. Sources: chapter 5; Appendix A; [D; B3, B8-B10, B23].

Table 6. The five productive circuits of Port Louis

Circuit	Starting flow	Productive function	Test of value
National gateway	Essential imports, productive inputs and exports	Preserve continuity and reliable market access	Cost, availability, time and resilience for Mauritian users
Way port	Passing vessels and their operational needs	Sell safe, timely marine services and develop suppliers	Net domestic service margin, skilled work and repeat calls
Regional maritime network	Selected feeder and deep-sea connections	Link viable origin and destination markets	Delivered advantage against other routes and partner gain

Table 6. The five productive circuits of Port Louis

Circuit	Starting flow	Productive function	Test of value
Port-city transformation	Cargo, visitors and maritime demand meeting local firms	Process, certify, fulfil, supply, repair and create experiences	Enterprise graduation, jobs, value retained and reinvested
Governed ocean development	Lawful marine uses, science and ecological systems	Build food, energy, data, biotechnology and stewardship capability	Commercial and scientific value within ecological and rights limits

Source: Author's five-circuit synthesis of the city economic system. [B3, B8-B10; D]

The five circuits distinguish customers and economic purposes. They overlap in practice: a seafood export can join fishing rights, landing, processing, finance and shipping; a bunkering call may bypass the Freeport entirely. The circuits organise the inquiry without implying that every transaction requires every component of the model.

How the economic system fits together

Three concepts carry the argument. Custodianship defines the responsibility. The Gateway and Ocean Economy organises its economic activity. Productive Yield judges the capability that activity leaves behind. The Blueprint's Ocean-Trade-Capital doctrine places these city relationships within the wider geography of African production and international markets. [B3.1, B3.5, B3.10]

Productive capability and the established literature

Hidalgo and Hausmann's work on economic complexity links the products an economy can make to combinations of underlying capabilities. It offers a reason to examine what firms can do repeatedly, rather than treating capital stock or traffic as a complete description of development. Productive Yield adopts a narrower, transaction-facing question: which capabilities remain after a particular maritime or ocean activity? It is not the Economic Complexity Index, nor a substitute for that method's data and validation. A Port Louis application needs evidence of skills, reproducible processes and firms progressing into more demanding work. [E11]

Port Louis is the Custodian Interface, providing the maritime, diplomatic and institutional anchor. Ébène is the Capital and Confidence Engine, where authorised actors supply financial and professional services. The Corridor Field comprises production and gateway activity through Mombasa's Northern Corridor, Durban's North-South Corridor and further gateways and feeder systems introduced in phases. Decisions and productive activity remain distributed across sovereign territories. [B3.10-B3.11]

The Blueprint's three execution stacks organise services across that geography. Custodian concerns capital, contract, risk and data custody; Corridor Services concerns trade finance, payments, insurance, compliance and dispute prevention; Corridor Programs concerns bankability, short sea reliability and data and environmental, social and governance (ESG) assurance. These functions support transactions undertaken by firms and institutions. Their place in the city argument is practical: they help the services, rights and finance needed by a productive circuit work together. [B3.10; B2.12-B2.13]

The remaining frameworks serve this central hierarchy. Gates locate decisions; operating layers identify capabilities; four custodial tests examine performance. Financing tiers and asset classes describe how particular exposures are funded and held. Table 7 is a reference map for those instruments. A transaction should be understandable without treating each classification as another strategy. [B3.10, B10.6.1, B25, B39.3; D]

Table 7. How the economic frameworks fit together

Framework	Question it answersl	Elements
Seven Strategic Gates	Where do flows meet decisions?	Maritime; government; capital; commercial; human; identity and culture; narrative and information
Five productive circuits	Where does economic activity occur?	National gateway; way port; regional maritime network; port- city transformation; governed ocean development
Six operating layers	Which capabilities make activity repeatable?	Physical; Industrial; Trade; Digital; Capital; Governance
Four custodial tests	Can the transaction endure?	Continuity; conversion; recourse; renewali
Productive Yield	What enduring capability remains?	Retained skills; stronger firms; repeatable methods; useful assets; reinvestment in Mauritius and partner territories
Custodial layers	Where are the system responsibilities located?	Port Louis Custodian Interface; Ébène Capital and Confidence Engine; wider Corridor Field
Execution stacks	Which functions connect those locations?	Custodian; Corridor Services; Corridor Programs
Four financing tiersi	What economic function is being financed?	Core corridor; flow-enabling; system; capability and knowledge assets
Five ocean asset classes	Which rights or legal structures carry the exposure?	Ocean leases; concessions; infrastructure SPVs; nature and blue carbon assets; ocean data and digital assets

Source: Author’s synthesis of the Blueprint and foundational doctrine. [B3.10, B10.6.1, B25, B39.3; D]

The economic loop begins with a usable flow: a ship call, an export order, a research opportunity or a national supply requirement. A port or ocean service makes the flow reliable; a local or partner enterprise solves a paid problem; standards and information make the result trusted; appropriate capital lets the enterprise repeat; earnings and knowledge are reinvested into better assets, skills or market access. Where a link fails, the loop leaks value. A ship can bunker and leave with almost all expenditure passing through to imported fuel. A box can be counted twice in a relay without creating a firm that can sell a higher-value service. A marine licence can produce a fee while weakening a habitat. The test is the productive yield left after the transaction, not its gross monetary or tonnage headline. [D, B15]

The six Economic Operating System layers describe the capabilities supporting each circuit: physical, industrial, trade, digital, capital and governance. Consider a seafood chain. Landing and cold storage provide physical capacity; processing supplies industrial competence; buyer acceptance establishes a market; traceable records support confidence; working capital funds production; and fishing rights and standards govern access. A circuit identifies the activity. The layers explain what must function for that activity to repeat. [D; B8, B23]

The harbour and outer anchorage provide Port Louis's maritime service platform. The Freeport and port-adjacent areas provide logistics value added services and selected transformation within the city's offering.

The wider city supplies firms, labour, learning, visitor activity and civic legitimacy. Ébène contributes national capital and professional capacity. Mauritius's marine zones have distinct potential uses under national law; Rodrigues and other territories retain their own institutions and interests. Regional ports and markets connect through agreement. This geography places the productive question at each handoff between places. [B8-B11, B23]

Six accounts keep the evidence intelligible: movement, production, income, fiscal exposure, capability and welfare. Throughput records scale. Domestic value added records output less intermediate consumption in Mauritius. Resident income follows labour and investment income, including cross-border payments. Fiscal accounts record receipts, spending and contingent liabilities. These measures support, but do not replace, the capability judgment made through Productive Yield.

The OECD's Ocean Economy to 2050 likewise distinguishes economic activity from the marine ecosystems and services on which it depends. Its measurement framework uses consistent activity boundaries and national-accounting concepts; it does not imply that gross turnover measures ocean wealth or that economic output alone captures ecosystem condition. For Port Louis, this supports separate production, income and ecological accounts. The additional Productive Yield claim concerns retained capability and must be demonstrated rather than inferred from a larger ocean-economy total. [E3]

A firm's wage bill and operating surplus are components of its value added; they should not be added again to an output-minus-inputs estimate. Purchasing from a domestic supplier creates a linkage, but counting the purchaser's expenditure and the supplier's sales as separate net gains exaggerates the result. Each firm's value added should be counted once. Activity by a foreign-owned establishment can contribute to domestic production while part of its investment income accrues abroad. Ownership, taxation and reinvestment therefore require a separate income account.

Capability is evidenced by retained skills, reproducible methods, stronger suppliers, diversified customers and useful assets. Welfare also concerns essential supply, consumer costs, employment access and environmental effects. Tax receipts should not be added to production as a second welfare gain. Ecological damage and public liabilities can offset private returns. Productive Yield is therefore a distinct capability test, supported by consistent economic accounts. [A1]

The same distinctions apply in partner territories. Producer income, retained skills, ownership of customer relationships and reinvestment should be traced at origin as well as in Mauritius. Higher movement does not establish a shared development gain. Ecological integrity and lawful rights remain boundary conditions across all accounts. [B20; P18; D]

The economic and public-purpose distinctions also establish an order of choice. Mauritius first protects the national gateway even when that duty has no regional-hub return. It then pursues contestable services and routes where users pay for a delivered advantage. Ocean industries enter the portfolio only where the right to operate, ecological baseline, capable firm and market can be demonstrated. A transaction can connect these domains: a fish shipment may depend on a lawful resource, a safe landing and cold chain, a buyer, a sailing and finance. But each link has a different decision maker and risk bearer. The model joins them through a contract and a repeatable economic result, not through a single agency or a zone label. [B8-B10, B18-B23; P4, P9]

The proposed causal mechanism is straightforward. Reliable access permits a transaction; firms perform useful paid work; credible records and recourse support repetition; reinvestment improves the next cycle. Diplomacy helps where the interfaces cross jurisdictions. The hypothesis is testable: later orders and calls should draw on stronger suppliers, better skills and more capable partners. If reliability improves without those gains, the full productive claim has not been demonstrated. [B8-B15, B18-B23, B73; D]

The mechanism can fail even where each participant performs its own contract. A buyer may require a standard that the origin supplier cannot yet meet; a dependable sailing may still be too expensive; a financier may price

genuine risk beyond the borrower’s margin. The model therefore requires a counterfactual and an explanation of additionality. Which outcome changes because the proposed interface exists, for whom, at what resource cost and with what evidence? This question distinguishes an architectural contribution from a relabelling of services already available.

Four tests organise that assessment. Continuity asks whether service and relevant rights endure ordinary disruption. Conversion identifies productive work attributable to the connection. Recourse examines remedies when performance or rights are disputed. Renewal examines whether reinvestment, learning and stewardship sustain the next cycle. Commercial profitability, institutional reliability and ecological renewal need distinct evidence; success in one does not establish the others.

This is where Port Louis differs from the continental gateways examined in the Mombasa and Lagos monographs. Mombasa's gateway has a terrestrial corridor and the possibility of an industrial spine. Lagos has metropolitan scale and a dense commercial territory. Port Louis has a small domestic market and no continental hinterland. Its comparative prospect is to assemble dependable interfaces: a passing ship with maritime services; a cargo connection with a consenting producer; a lawful ocean activity with science, capital and stewardship; a cross-border transaction with professional interpretation and recourse. Mauritius cannot capture every flow, and an ocean cannot be owned as a captive market. Custodianship becomes economically distinctive when it makes a limited number of interfaces so dependable that independent actors choose to use them repeatedly. [B8-B10, B13-B15, B23; M, L]

For a vessel call, follow booking, supplier performance, liability and learning. For a producer, follow fulfilment, payment, reinvestment and route choice. For an ocean venture, follow authorised access, scientific results, benefit sharing and resource condition. Improvement should be visible against a baseline and the best feasible alternative, with exceptional support reported separately.

Port Louis's development proposition is to earn from reliable maritime services, logistics value added services, governed ocean uses and trusted cross-border relationships, then carry the resulting capability into the next cycle. An annual account should show which enterprises and relationships grew stronger, alongside failures, withdrawals and unresolved public costs.

From port call to enterprise capability

The economic system will remain a diagram unless firms can move into better positions. The port's existing service list suggests a ladder. At the entry level, a locally rooted business may supply consumables, transport staff or perform routine maintenance. It can then acquire certification, equipment, safety procedures and reliable response time to win repeat contracts. A more capable firm may integrate several services for vessels or export chains, train technicians and serve multiple clients. Some firms may eventually own specialised assets, operate across ports, develop intellectual property or export professional services. A public programme cannot decree that ascent, but procurement, skills and fair market access can remove needless barriers (Table 8). [O4, O5, D]

Table 8. The enterprise capability ladder

Enterprise stage	Typical Port Louis opportunity	Capability to acquire	Evidence of graduation
Entry supplier	Stores, provisioning, local transport or basic support	Compliance, safety, billing and reliable delivery	Repeat contracts with more than one customer
Specialist	Marine repair, refrigeration, survey support, testing or waste service	Certified people, equipment and technical standards	Paid technical margin and lower failure rates

Table 8. The enterprise capability ladder

Enterprise stage	Typical Port Louis opportunity	Capability to acquire	Evidence of graduation
Integrator	Bundled vessel call, cold-chain or export- compliance service	Coordination, data, quality assurance and working capital	Several suppliers and customers linked through a repeat offer
Regional operator	Service at Port Louis and partner nodes by consent	Cross-border contracts, partner relationships and resilient operations	Repeat regional revenue and local partner benefit
Asset or knowledge owner	Vessel, specialised facility, technology or research-based service	Long-term capital, governance, intellectual property and renewal	Reinvestment and capability surviving an individual contract

Source: Author's enterprise ladder, informed by existing port services. [O4-O5; D]

Upgrading need not culminate in asset ownership. A specialist repairer can gain skill, margin and resilience while remaining independent. Procurement, certification and fair payment matter to that progression. CHCL and concession terms should be tested for their effect on access to contracts and facilities, particularly where carrier participation may influence purchasing. [I]

The way-port economy and the cargo economy create different enterprise entry points. Ships buy time-sensitive services at anchorage or alongside; shippers buy an end-to-end delivered outcome; tourists buy an arrival experience; marine industries buy lawful access, research and technical support. Port Louis should therefore assemble a portfolio of customer journeys , not one universal port product. It should ask a master of a passing vessel, a Malagasy producer, a Mauritian importer, a cruise operator and a marine scientist what each must accomplish and what prevents repetition. That research can identify niches where local firms have a credible advantage.

The city is part of the productive machinery. A crew change requires airport links, documents, transport and sometimes medical care. A cruise arrival needs a workable route from ship to urban businesses. Technicians need training, workshops and stable work. A cold-chain firm needs land, power, inspection and access through port gates. The city can lose the value of a call through congestion, poor public space or a missing supplier just as a terminal can lose it through a missed window. Port-city planning should therefore account for productive workplaces and daily life alongside freight access and heritage. [B8; O4-O6]

Finance must fit the enterprise's stage. A chandler needs working capital; a specialist may need equipment finance against repeat contracts. A regional operator needs sufficiently secure demand and access before vessel investment. A scientific venture needs milestone-based research funding before receivables exist. Ébène's contribution is to distinguish those exposures and match them to competent financiers and explicit loss bearers. [B22, B36-B45]

The product of the system is thus more than a port service. It is a population of Mauritian and partner firms able to solve maritime and ocean problems repeatedly, earn from that competence and improve it. This is why the Mombasa and Lagos lessons matter without being copied. Mombasa asks whether gateway movement builds productive authorship; Lagos asks whether commerce compounds enterprise power. Port Louis asks whether the service, law, knowledge and relationships around a shared ocean endure when a vessel reroutes, a supplier changes or a political cycle ends. [M, L, D]

6 From maritime transactions to productive enterprise

Three transactions reveal whether the proposition works for a vessel, a regional producer and an ocean enterprise. Each must pass a different customer, public-interest and ecological test.

Consider first a Cape-routed vessel making a service call. The ship's operator compares Port Louis with alternative stops on deviation, fuel price, safe anchorage, bunkering capacity, service reliability and time. A local agent assembles permissions and suppliers; a bunker firm provides fuel; a chandler supplies stores; a technician addresses a defect; a surveyor or authority may verify the result. The imported fuel component can dwarf the domestic service margin. For Mauritius, the transaction is more valuable if it supports skilled marine work, competitive independent suppliers, safe fuel handling and a repeat relationship with a line or vessel manager. It is less valuable if a temporary diversion justifies a permanent public liability or if environmental risks are left with the public. The observed rise in outer-harbour and bunkering calls in FY2024/25 makes this a real market to study, while MPA itself links part of that rise to the Red Sea crisis. [O4, O6]

The way-port study should establish the share of fuel-only and bundled calls, turnaround, domestic value added and repeat purchases under normal routing. Published totals cannot answer those questions. A protected sample of customer and supplier records could reveal whether the binding constraint is repair capacity, provisioning, crew logistics or coordination within an existing call.

An observed Port Louis operating test

MPA’s FY2024/25 report supplies a useful observed contrast. Total container throughput rose to 719,782 TEU, while average moves per ship’s working hour at the Mauritius Container Terminal fell from 39.4 to 38.3; berth occupancy increased from 81.8 to 85.8 per cent. These measures have different denominators and do not, by themselves, diagnose the cause of delay. They do establish why rising volume cannot be used as proof of improved working-hour productivity. A commercial investigation should connect those operating records to vessel waiting, service bundles and customer costs before assigning an intervention. [O6, printed pp. 4, 81]

The service call has an established supplier base. MPA lists eight bunker suppliers, six bunker barges, at-berth and anchorage delivery, and the repair facilities of Taylor Smith and Chantier Naval de l'Océan Indien. Its operator register includes water provision, chandlers and repair firms. These records establish available functions. Actual call records would show which combinations customers buy, how long they take and what local suppliers retain. An initial sample should distinguish fuel-only, fuel-plus-service and repair-led visits using redacted invoices and turnaround records. [O11-O12, O15]

Illustrative accounting example using assumed monetary units. Suppose a fuel and service business receives 100 monetary units, pays 75 for imported fuel resold to the vessel and consumes 15 in other purchased inputs. Its trade margin and service output is 25 units; after intermediate consumption, gross value added is 10. Fuel purchased for resale is deducted in deriving the trade margin, rather than counted again as intermediate consumption. If compensation is 6 units and gross operating surplus is 4 units, these explain the same 10 units under the simplified assumption of no production taxes, subsidies or mixed income. These are components of the same total. Gross operating surplus also includes provision for consumption of fixed capital; it is not all distributable profit.

The other purchased inputs may include domestic services whose suppliers generate their own value added. The wider account should identify those establishments and count their value added once, excluding imported content and avoiding duplication of gross receipts. A supplier’s ownership determines whether some investment income is payable abroad, while retention and reinvestment affect the future capability account. Fuel tonnage alone discloses none of these relationships.

The ship’s benefit is a separate account: deviation, charges, time and disruption compared with another feasible stop. Public appraisal adds safety, waste, spill liability and fuel resilience. Learning and repeat work may make a technical service developmentally valuable beyond its invoice, but that claim needs evidence. Large bunker turnover and enduring domestic capability remain different observations.

Consider a Malagasy producer with an identified buyer. A direct route, another relay and a Port Louis connection each have a delivered cost and risk. A Mauritian or African fleet owner might supply a scheduled leg; a Port Louis Freeport enterprise might consolidate, test or cold-handle the product; Ébène-based professional services might finance and insure fulfilment. None of those steps is compulsory. The connection creates value if it beats an available alternative for the customer, pays for directional vessel use and leaves the producer with a fair share of work, rights and earnings. [B18-B20, I]

The operational question is whether the service meets its promised day and onward connection. The enterprise question is who performs the productive work and learns from it. Diplomacy supports agreement on inspections, records and emergency continuity; capital funds market formation and assigns early losses. This transaction shows how Port Louis's integrated offering has to work for each participant.

The proposed Port Louis-Toamasina service needs paid cargo and rates in each direction, a workable vessel cycle and a customer comparison with existing services. Cost includes hire or capital, fuel, port and handling charges, crew, insurance, reefer power, empty equipment and disruption. Published bilateral trade is a prospecting clue; a shipowner needs actual shipper commitments. Existing sailings and rates must be mapped before a new rotation can be specified. [B18-B21, I]

Illustrative round-trip sensitivity using assumed costs and loads. Assume a vessel has 300 usable TEU slots on each leg, giving 600 directional slots per completed round trip. Suppose fixed cycle cost is USD 100,000, net freight receipt is USD 500 per paid TEU and variable cost is USD 100 per paid TEU. Fixed cost must cover hire or capital use on a consistent basis, crew, insurance and the fixed voyage and port costs for the stated cycle, including scheduled idle time. Variable cost must include handling and other load-related costs that the operator bears. The assumptions explain break-even mechanics; they are not observed Port Louis-Toamasina prices or a vessel specification.

Each paid TEU contributes USD 400 toward fixed cost. Break-even is therefore 250 paid TEU per round trip, equivalent to 41.7 per cent of the combined directional slots. A voyage with 220 paid TEU from Mauritius and 60 in the return direction earns USD 112,000 of contribution and a USD 12,000 cycle surplus before tax and excluded risks. If return cargo falls to 30 TEU, the cycle only breaks even. If fixed cost rises by 20 per cent while loads remain 220 and 60, the result becomes an USD 8,000 loss. The comparatively well-loaded leg does not establish the viability of the round trip (Table 9).

Table 9. Illustrative round trip economics

Sensitivity to paid loads and fixed cycle cost under stated assumptions

Illustrative case	Paid TEU outward and return
Base assumption	220 and 60
Weaker return leg	220 and 30
Fixed cost rises to 120,000	220 and 60

Source: Author’s calculation using the assumptions stated in the text. [A1] These are illustrative costs and loads, not observed service prices.

The real model requires separate rates and costs by direction, commodity and equipment type; empty repositioning, reefer power, weight and stowage constraints, missed windows, fuel sensitivity, vessel downtime and working capital must enter explicitly. The TEU count is a slot measure, not a substitute for tonnes or

commodity demand. A longer cycle can also require additional vessels to maintain weekly departures. These operational relationships determine fleet cost and cannot be inferred from a map.

The customer’s delivered advantage remains a separate test. A shipowner can cover costs while a producer would be better served directly; Freeport processing can earn a margin while the feeder loses money. Each party needs its own viable account. The Mauritian or African fleet proposition earns its place when paid directional loads sustain a dependable connection and the producer’s total outcome improves. Partner terms should disclose the location of work, control of buyers and data, income distribution and rights to revise or leave the arrangement.

Address the binding constraint first. A buyer may require certification and traceability; a connection may need protected windows; weak directional loading may favour co-loading or a smaller service. The minimum coherent system is one complete order from producer to payment. Establish that chain before adding assets. [D, p. 23; B18-B20; I]

The sequence begins in Madagascar, with a producer and buyer agreeing product, volume, quality, delivery terms and who owns the customer relationship. The shipowner then quotes a sailing and the two port interfaces confirm a workable berth and inspection window. A Mauritian Freeport firm offers a priced service only if testing, consolidation, processing or fulfilment improves the buyer's delivered result. A lender may fund the producer's inputs against an enforceable order and verified milestones; cargo insurance prices spoilage and delay risks; payment follows the agreed proof of performance. The producer, shipowner, Freeport firm and financier must each be able to show their own margin and exposure. The public account then asks what skills and earnings remain at origin and in Mauritius, and whether the next order can be fulfilled with less exceptional support. This proposed sequence identifies the commitments needed to make the chain work. [B18-B22, P7-P8, P11, I]

Co-development requires joint decisions over products, standards, processing location and routing. Contracts should identify the owner of the buyer relationship and data, margins by service, liability for spoilage or delay, and revision or exit rights. A useful Mauritian step improves the delivered offer while helping the originating firm serve future orders, including through another route. That is co-authorship expressed in a transaction. [D, pp. 12-13; B20; P18]

Existing capacity offers places to test the chain. MPA records fish-handling interfaces at Trou Fanfaron, Froid des Mascareignes and Mauritius Freeport Development; its directory lists cold storage and processors including Princes Tuna and Pelagic Process. These firms and facilities provide an industrial starting point. A Madagascar-linked contract would still require willing participants and a delivered advantage that preserves productive opportunity at origin. [O13, O15]

Finally, consider a marine biotechnology or aquaculture venture in Mauritian waters. The initial asset may be a scientific capability and a lawful site rather than a quay. The competent authority needs a spatial and ecological baseline, legitimate access rights and a way to protect other users. A researcher or firm needs a valid purpose, skills, equipment and a path from discovery to a paying application. Port Louis may supply vessels, sampling logistics, cold storage, laboratory links, data or an investment interface. Rodrigues or a coastal community may have an independent interest in the activity's location and benefit. A Blue SEZ label does not confer permission; a financeable project is one whose rights, science, market and stewardship can be specified together. [B9-B12]

Figure 7. From producer to payment

BEGIN WITH A BUYER AND AN AGREED ORDER

Specify product, quantity, quality, price, delivery, proof of performance and ownership of the customer relationship. Compare direct shipment, another relay and Port Louis.

1. PRODUCER

Prepare the order in Madagascar. Retain an agreed role in standards, processing and routing.

2. SEA CONNECTION

A shipowner quotes a viable service. Both ports confirm workable handling, inspection and connection windows.

3. OPTIONAL FREEPORT STEP

A firm prices testing, consolidation, cold handling, processing or fulfilment only where it improves the offer.

4. BUYER ACCEPTANCE

The buyer verifies the product against agreed terms and confirms the evidence needed for payment.

PAYMENT, FINANCE AND RECOURSE

Settlement follows agreed evidence and timing. Finance must fit each cash flow; insurance and contracts allocate specific risks. Every participant needs a viable account.

RIGHTS AND VALUE

Partners shape processing location and standards; protect buyer and data relationships; allocate spoilage and delay; retain revision and exit rights.

THE NEXT ORDER

Trace work, margins, earnings, skills and reinvestment on both shores. Can the next order be fulfilled with stronger capability and less exceptional support?

Diplomacy supports accepted records, schedules and disruption procedures while each authority retains its mandate. Illustrative chain, not a documented contract. Sources: chapter 6; [B18-B22; P7-P8, P11, P18].

Fish landing and processing provide a more established starting point than an offshore laboratory. Princes Tuna's Marine Road facility describes production of frozen precooked loins, pouches, jars and canned products: one marine input reaches several manufacturing formats and buyers. This demonstrates transformation capacity without establishing its net domestic yield. Following a batch through catch documentation, landing, processing, inspection, sale and settlement would reveal the retained skills, supplier income, by-product uses and environmental costs. MPA's rounded fish-traffic estimate also needs a consistent reporting period before use as the baseline. [O13, O15, O19]

A proposed first Port Louis Blue SEZ should be compared with the established harbour seafood and way-port service chains before selecting an anchor. The comparison may favour shared verification or laboratory capacity, supplier upgrading, a different site or no designation. It requires a paying purpose, a lawful and environmentally defensible perimeter, independent public control, willing users, measured local value and a credible exit. Existing firms retain their rights and commercial choices. [B7.9-B10, O13]

The commercial foundations of a regional service

The worked route calculation exposes three separate accounts: the shipowner’s cycle, the producer’s delivered result and the value created by Port Louis services. They should be reconciled before the proposed connection is described as viable. Existing facilities establish a possible supply base; they do not commit their owners or validate a particular route. [B18-B21; O13, O15; I]

A commercial offer needs defined products, seasonality, quality, temperature, volume, delivery and payment terms. Vessel size and frequency must fit that demand in both directions. The route account includes empty equipment and full cycle cost. The customer account includes direct and rival alternatives. The development account identifies additional work, capability and earnings at origin and in Mauritius.

The accounts may disagree. A profitable Freeport service may sit beside a loss-making feeder; an operator may cover its costs while the producer has a better direct route. The illustrative 300-slot, USD 100,000 cycle shows only break-even mechanics. Current quotations, directional rates and customer commitments would determine an actual commercial result.

These cases pose distinct tests. A way-port bundle needs repeat calls and domestic service value. The short sea service needs directional paid loads, a workable vessel cycle and a better shipper outcome than a direct or rival route. An ocean venture needs valid rights, science, users and stewardship. The matrix below states what is observed, what is illustrative and what would decide each case (Table 10). [B9-B10, B18-B23; P13-P14; D]

Table 10. Evidence across the three worked cases

Documented anchors, illustrations and the evidence still needed

Case	Documented anchor	Assumed or proposed	Decisive next evidence
Way port	MPA vessel calls, bunker supply, listed suppliers and repair facilities [O6, O11-O12, O15]	100-unit service account is an accounting example	Redacted call invoices, purchased bundles, normal-route repeat rate and domestic value added
Short sea	Blueprint route family and public port facilities [B16, B18; O5]	300-slot legs and USD 100,000 cycle cost are illustrative	Current schedules, paid directional cargo, vessel quote and competing delivered offers
Ocean venture	Existing fish-handling and processing functions [O13, O15, O19]	Marine biotechnology or Blue SEZ venture is prospective	Lawful site, ecological baseline, rights, committed users and funded science

Source: Author’s synthesis. Sources for documented anchors are identified within the table.

The Freeport and the productive turn

The Freeport connects movement to market readiness through consolidation, storage, cold handling, grading, labelling, testing, packaging, fulfilment and distribution. Processing adds another step where demand and productive competence justify it. The Blueprint’s Freeport 2.0 proposition is to deepen that enterprise capability while strengthening originating producers. Each paid function must establish the customer problem it solves. [B8, B19; P8]

The Africa I See describes the corridor as continuing beyond the shoreline. Freeport services give that continuity a practical expression in Port Louis, connecting ocean movement to production, buyer requirements and distribution. Their place in a chain depends on the product, customer and agreed division of work with partners. [T, pp. 51-52, 59; B8]

Consider the economic relationship when a product needs preparation before onward shipment. A Freeport firm may provide temperature control, testing, traceability, consolidation or fulfilment at an agreed price. A technician maintains product conditions; a quality specialist verifies the buyer's requirements; a coordinator connects the order to transport and delivery. These activities link port time to skilled work, supplier income and repeat business. A pure relay still needs an efficient transfer. Additional services earn their place where the buyer values them and the originating producer benefits. The commercial account must distinguish imported inputs, domestic value added and the work and earnings retained at origin. [B8, B19-B20]

The Blueprint's test of productive yield asks what enduring and reproducible capability remains because economic activity occurred. It is a stronger question than the number of units handled. A service that teaches firms to meet standards, deepens a local supplier base and helps a partner producer earn more can be valuable

even at modest volume. A high-volume relay that produces only fragile handling income may be less transformative. Productive yield should be assessed in Mauritius and across the consenting geography, consistent with AIC2030's broader architecture of creating, transforming, retaining, circulating, reinvesting and compounding value. [B1, B15, D]

Value can be lost at the joins, even when each asset performs well. A ship may arrive on time while a producer lacks the certification to sell, the working capital to fulfil the order or the data needed to obtain insurance. A Freeport firm may provide a paid service without transferring skills or leaving a stronger supplier behind. The doctrine calls this an architecture deficit: the distance between possessing useful assets and making them function as a productive system. Port Louis can narrow that distance only in named chains where the weak interface and the party able to repair it are known. [D, pp. 7-9]

The Madagascar transaction developed earlier in this chapter now supplies a narrower question: which productive step belongs in the Freeport? Consolidation, testing, finishing or fulfilment earns its place when the buyer values it and the producer’s delivered result improves. Contract terms should identify the location of work, margin, learning and customer rights. [B8, B19-B20; P8]

Within Port Louis's offering, the Freeport performs the Blueprint's transformation and compliance function: preparing products, supporting accepted standards and connecting maritime movement to customer requirements. Maritime coordination and diplomacy support the wider connection, while Ébène contributes capital, risk and professional services. Their economic relationship is visible when this combination improves the customer's delivered result. Chapter 9 develops the institutional and financial relationship between the two cities. [B8, B23]

Nearshoring and micro-manufacturing become credible when anchored in actual product chains. The sequence runs from customers and product fit to processing needs, workforce and site selection. The Blueprint extends this productive interface through the Passerelle Doctrine, which concerns the progression of African firms into external markets while retaining origin value and learning. [B12, B30]

The Indian Ocean Passerelle and firm graduation

A passerelle is a governed, multi-node transition system between production economies and destination markets. It combines product completion, market-making, capital, data, standards and public-interest safeguards. Its purpose is to help goods and firms acquire the readiness needed for a market while preserving production, ownership and learning at origin. A quicker shipment alone does not establish that transition. The Indian Ocean connects African production with distinct Middle Eastern and Asian market regimes; the Blueprint proposes an architecture for crossing those differences deliberately. [B30.1-B30.5]

The Blueprint identifies two complementary nearshoring gateway propositions: Ras Al Khaimah for access to West Asian and GCC markets, and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh for industrial and mass-market Asia. It names four trading-hub roles: Dubai for GCC and MENA liquidity and re-export, Singapore for ASEAN aggregation and standards, Mumbai for Indian-subcontinent market depth and finance, and Tokyo for high-trust, high-compliance East Asian markets. These are strategic reference roles in the January architecture, not evidence of agreements, exclusive relationships or an obligatory itinerary for every product. [B30.12, B30.14-B30.15]

Nearshoring gateways perform selected access-enabling completion: final processing, packaging, certification, regulatory alignment or market adaptation where those functions cannot yet be performed adequately at origin. Trading hubs perform a different task: connecting prepared supply with buyers, distribution, liquidity and risk services. Capital, data and standards nodes make those relationships intelligible and financeable. The distinction prevents a trading intermediary from being credited with industrial transformation merely because it invoices or redistributes a product. Port Louis contributes voluntary alignment, continuity and trust; Ébène

supplies appropriate professional and financial interfaces. Production remains at origin, with commercial execution supplied by the relevant destination actors. [B30.5, B30.9, B30.14-B30.16]

The firm transition ladder has four stages. Entry secures first compliant market access through production at origin and selected completion elsewhere. Stabilisation builds repeat orders, finance access, standards mastery and buyer relationships. Upgrading brings deeper processing, certification and complexity back into African productive systems. Graduation permits direct market access with less dependence on nearshoring support. The bridge is successful when firms can cross it and rely on it less, not when intermediaries make themselves permanently indispensable. [B30.5.4-B30.6]

The Blueprint’s approximate 60/40 allocation expresses a developmental intention: most defined value should remain with African production, processing, employment and learning, while access-enabling completion receives an appropriate share. It is not an observed margin or fixed contractual entitlement. Appraisal must first define the value measure, participants, period and accounting boundary, then test the actual allocation. Origin capability should deepen as dependence on external completion declines. [B30.6, B30.13]

The safeguards are consequently substantive: origin ownership, auditable value allocation, learning transfer, time-bound support and review of whether completion still serves its stated purpose. Recognition, incentives and any conditions on public facilitation belong to competent public authorities and valid commercial agreements. They do not give the custodian powers to penalise firms, restrict trade or allocate capital. Rules of origin, customs treatment and market access require transaction-specific legal assessment under the applicable regimes. The Blueprint's claims of African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and World Trade Organization (WTO) compatibility remain design intentions to substantiate for particular instruments. [B30.7-B30.11; B2.12-B2.13]

The Freeport's contribution to the Passerelle is a logistics or transformation step that improves product readiness and strengthens the originating firm. As producers graduate toward direct market access, the services they need may change. The performance account should trace buyer acceptance, repeat orders, processing retained at origin, skills and intellectual property acquired, working-capital conditions and declining dependence on exceptional support. These results connect the Passerelle to Port Louis's enterprise ladder. [B30.17-B30.19; D]

Part Four The productive and governed ocean

7 Ocean industries and Blue Special Economic Zones

The ocean is productive territory with competing users, ecological limits and rights. Its industries must be built around that reality, rather than around a list of attractive sectors.

Ocean industries can create demand for vessels, equipment, logistics, technical work and scientific services beyond container movement. Port Louis should participate where its maritime access, Freeport firms and institutions offer a specific advantage. Production and research may belong elsewhere in Mauritius or in partner territories. The city’s economic claim rests on useful work supplied to those activities, under the rights and ecological conditions governing each location. [B9-B15, B23; P9, P13-P14]

The Blueprint does not end at container shipping. It places ocean industries inside an economic system in which port calls, food, energy, science, services and finance can reinforce one another. Its ten growth engines are: transshipment and short sea centrality; logistics value added services; nearshoring and micro-manufacturing; Madagascar-Mauritius co-development; ocean food and aquaculture; marine biotechnology and ocean materials; green maritime energy and bunkering; blue carbon and nature-based assets;

ocean data and intelligence; and maritime services, arbitration and governance. These are proposed engines of activity, not ten funded projects. Their viability, regulation and ecological effects differ. [B12, B15]

The five industrial clusters organise what firms produce: trade logistics and value added services; nearshoring and micro-manufacturing; ocean food; marine biotechnology and materials; and maritime professional services. Energy, ecological assets and intelligence connect across them. The ten engines identify expansion opportunities, while the circuits in chapter 5 identify customers and relationships. These are complementary descriptions of one portfolio. [B12.5-B12.9, B15]

Ocean trade logistics and value added services

The first cluster turns a maritime connection into work that a customer will purchase. Consolidation, deconsolidation, cold storage, packaging, labelling, certification and fulfilment can improve a shipment's readiness for its next market. A trader or producer pays when the service reduces damage, makes an order deliverable, meets a buyer's requirement or combines fragmented consignments into a usable flow. Port Louis provides maritime access; the Freeport can perform the selected work; firms at origin retain their own productive functions. The relevant economic gain is the service margin and capability created after imported inputs and operating costs, together with the producer's improved market result. [B12.5, B15.4, B19]

This cluster connects the first two growth engines: shipping frequency brings usable flows, and logistics value added services make selected flows more useful. It also supports the Madagascar co-development engine when origin production and Mauritian services are contracted as complementary functions. Predictable sailing windows, customs procedures and cold-chain interfaces allow the relationship to repeat. Training should enable workers and firms to progress from handling into quality assurance, technical operations and customer coordination. Ébène's contribution is appropriate working capital, insurance and payment support for those transactions; ocean diplomacy supports reciprocal interfaces with willing partner ports and administrations. [B12.10-B12.14, B15.3-B15.6, B20, B22-B23]

Nearshoring and micro manufacturing

The second cluster introduces a further productive step. The Blueprint identifies private-label finishing, cosmetics and nutraceutical processing, precision assembly and branded packaging as possible activities within compact, modular facilities. Their economic justification comes from a defined product family and buyer: the work must improve the product's market readiness sufficiently to cover processing, transport, compliance and finance. A Freeport site becomes useful when facilities, skills and permissions fit that order. In this model, Port Louis connects inputs and finished products while Mauritius develops repeatable production and certification capability. [B12.6, B15.5, B19.6-B19.8]

This is the third growth engine and one possible destination for the services created by the first two. It should also deepen the fourth engine's reciprocity. For a Madagascar chain, the commercial agreement needs to identify which processing remains at origin, which step Mauritius performs, who owns the brand or intellectual property, and how each firm benefits. An origin producer should be able to build its own capability as the chain matures. Capital supports equipment and production cycles appropriate to actual orders; neither a zone label nor a regular vessel establishes a manufacturing market by itself. [B15.5-B15.6, B19.9, B20]

Ocean food systems

The third cluster spans fisheries, offshore and lagoon aquaculture, seafood processing, seaweed cultivation and cold-chain logistics. These are distinct production systems with different scientific, ecological and commercial requirements. A fishing operation depends on lawful catch and sustainable stocks; aquaculture depends on suitable sites, species, inputs and husbandry; seaweed production requires a cultivation and processing pathway matched to a buyer. The Blueprint connects them through traceability, quality transformation, certification and market access. That connection should allow Mauritius to develop food production and technical capabilities alongside services for regional producers. [B12.7, B15.7]

Port Louis connects ocean food production to landing, vessel and equipment services, temperature-controlled movement, processing and export markets. Freeport firms can supply agreed storage, preparation or transformation. For an enterprise in this chain, the practical requirement is a product that meets the buyer's quality, origin and delivery conditions. Laboratory services, trained handlers, reliable refrigeration and recognised documentation can make that possible. Research and producer knowledge establish what the marine system can sustain. Ébène can support production finance, receivables and insurable risks; diplomatic cooperation can support recognised cross-border procedures. The productive result includes the producer's earnings and capability at origin alongside the work undertaken in Port Louis. [B9, B12.7, B13, B22-B23]

Ocean food must be appraised from lawful production to a paying buyer. Relevant gains include safety, lower spoilage, husbandry and processing skills, supplier earnings and repeat orders. A cargo may support short sea shipping only where harvest calendars, temperature requirements and directional volumes fit the vessel cycle. Sustainable stocks, clean water and coastal livelihoods are conditions of continued production. [B12.7, B15.7, B18-B20]

Marine biotechnology and ocean materials

The fourth cluster gives ocean development a scientific and intellectual property dimension. The Blueprint discusses marine enzymes and biological compounds, cosmetics and pharmaceutical inputs, biomaterials and sustainable substitutes. Its ocean-space chapter also links marine research to future health capability, including potential applications in diagnostics and medicines. These are research and commercialisation directions with different development times and regulatory requirements. A biological resource becomes a productive opportunity through discovery, validation, processing knowledge, lawful access and a credible path to a user. [B9.5, B12.8, B15.8]

The draft national policy paper extends this research interface to marine and tropical medicine. That widens the partnership question to health research institutions, relevant laboratories and clinical or regulatory expertise where an application requires them. Its place in the monograph is a proposed capability pathway: lawful marine research can connect to a defined health question, scientific validation and appropriately governed development. Tropical medicine should retain its own scientific scope rather than being presented as automatically derived from an ocean resource. [P9.3.4; B9.5]

The productive chain begins with authorised research and biological samples, continues through laboratory work and validation, and may lead to pilot production, licensing or a specialised product. Port Louis's economic connection lies in supporting those steps: research-vessel services, sample handling, equipment movements and links between institutions and enterprises. An appropriate production or export stage may use Freeport services. Ébène can contribute intellectual-property, licensing, finance and risk expertise. As an application develops, the city may gain demand for technicians, specialised suppliers and scientific services. International research agreements belong within ocean diplomacy where public cooperation is required; research results and commercialisation remain the work of the participating institutions and firms. [B9.5-B9.6, B12.8, B13, B22-B23]

The sixth engine's long-term value lies in retaining scientific capability and a fair share of the knowledge produced. Access terms need to address who may use samples and data, how intellectual property is assigned, what benefits return to relevant participants and how future research can continue. A laboratory record, trained researcher, reproducible method or licensed process may be a more meaningful early result than a large export forecast. Compact land requirements should not be confused with inexpensive research: funding must fit the technical milestones and time needed to validate an application. [B9.5, B12.8, B15.8; D]

Maritime and ocean based professional services

The fifth cluster connects physical maritime work with the professional services that make transactions dependable. The Blueprint includes ship repair and engineering, marine insurance and reinsurance, arbitration, maritime law, compliance and digital services. Chapter 3 describes the way-port customer purchasing fuel, stores, repairs or a crew change. Ocean industries extend that demand to equipment maintenance, technical assurance and more specialised obligations. These relationships can support technicians progressing into engineering, suppliers meeting repeat quality requirements, and local professionals undertaking more complex contractual, insurance and verification work. [B12.9-B12.14, B15.12]

The tenth engine connects professional capability across the ocean economy. An aquaculture operation may need equipment servicing and insurance; a feeder service needs contracts and operational coordination; a biotechnology venture needs agreements governing research and intellectual property. Port Louis provides the maritime interface, firms and access to legal institutions; Ébène contributes capital, insurance and financial intelligence. Demand for these services gives the dual-city relationship economic substance. Its productive yield appears in specialised firms, transferable skills and dependable institutions serving successive transactions, with judicial and arbitral independence preserved. [B12.9, B13.10, B15.12, B22; D]

Energy ecological assets and ocean intelligence

Energy development has two connected markets. Maritime customers need fuel, electricity and reliable supply services; Mauritius also needs secure energy for households and productive activity. The Blueprint proposes offshore and nearshore production, including offshore wind pilots and floating solar, alongside aquaculture platforms and research stations as parts of a wider offshore infrastructure horizon. Their sites, technologies and potential users differ. Port Louis can provide equipment logistics, installation support, maintenance vessels and an interface with energy services. Investment follows the suitability of the resource, a workable connection or supply route, an offtake arrangement and responsibilities for environmental effects and eventual removal. [B9.2-B9.6, B11.8-B11.11]

The seventh engine connects green maritime energy and bunkering to Port Louis's existing vessel-service economy. Conventional bunker sales can produce large gross turnover while much of the fuel value is imported and resold. Domestic work lies in storage, delivery, port services, technical support and associated enterprise. Future fuels would require appropriate handling, equipment, training, infrastructure and customers. This gives the city a potential pathway from fuel delivery into more demanding maritime energy services, subject to technological development and viable demand. The Blueprint calls for flexibility between pathways. National storage and supply security provide an additional public-interest connection; investment needs to serve that purpose and the maritime customer on explicit terms. [B11.10, B15.9, I]

The eighth engine gives ecological systems an economic role in their own right. The Blueprint treats mangroves as climate infrastructure that can reduce erosion and storm exposure and help protect ports, logistics assets and coastal livelihoods. Seagrass, reefs and other marine ecosystems have distinct ecological functions that require distinct evidence. Protection, restoration and monitoring can support scientific and technical work while preserving fisheries and continuity. Any proposed carbon or biodiversity instrument must establish an eligible method, measured results, rights, beneficiaries and funding obligations. An ecosystem's protective value exists even where no marketable credit can be issued. [B9.7-B9.8, B15.10]

Ecological knowledge should inform gateway and ocean-investment decisions. Ébène can support finance where verified rights, outcomes and obligations make an instrument credible. Authorities and affected communities must participate in benefit arrangements. Freshwater, catchments, coastal waters and marine habitats form connected dependencies: deterioration upstream can undermine the productive maritime economy. [B2.2, B9.7-B9.8, B15.10, B22]

The ninth engine concerns ocean data and intelligence as services that institutions and firms may use. Submarine cables, sensors, monitoring stations and port information systems provide different parts of the infrastructure. The proposed Ocean Digital Twin combines vessel, oceanographic, climate, infrastructure, energy and environmental information for planning and operational decisions. Potential users include port operators, research institutions, insurers, shipping companies and public agencies. A service earns commercial relevance when it improves a defined decision with information that is reliable, timely and lawfully available. [B11.9, B13.7, B15.11]

Ocean intelligence becomes an economic service when observation is converted into information a user can act on. Port Louis supplies operational questions from vessel movements, port planning and maritime services; research institutions contribute science; specialised firms can provide validated analysis. Ébène can support analytics, licensing and risk applications. Data custody, protected access and correction procedures are part of the service. Shared observations and standards may require international cooperation, while commercial records need confidentiality. The capability retained includes technicians, scientific records, analytical methods and firms able to improve the next decision. Subsea connectivity provides enabling infrastructure; the service earns its value through the reliability and usefulness of its information. [B11.9, B13.7-B13.11, B15.11]

Coastal services and the productive geography

The Blueprint's broader corridor value stack includes coastal urban services and tourism alongside production, energy, maritime logistics, industry and strategic assets. For the city monograph, cruise and passenger activity connects maritime arrival with guiding, cultural enterprise, hospitality, local transport and the waterfront economy. Research visits, professional exchanges and maritime convening can also create demand for urban services. These activities belong within the economic account when local firms and people benefit from them. Their inclusion does not change the Blueprint's explicit exclusion of resort-led development from its Blue SEZ design. [B3.8, B7.11.2, B10.3, B10.9]

The city relationship must remain specific even when production is geographically dispersed. Ocean food, energy, conservation and research may operate elsewhere in the Republic or in sovereign partner territories. Port Louis can connect a suitable activity to vessel support, logistics, product preparation, technical services or institutions without relocating its productive base. Rodrigues and other places retain functions shaped by their own institutions, communities and ecological conditions. The economic account should follow work and earnings in each location: what the producer supplies, what Port Louis contributes, what Ébène finances or protects, and what capability each participant can use again. This is the city's service relationship with the productive ocean. [B9-B12, B23; D]

From industrial clusters to the ten growth engines

The portfolio connects shipping, logistics, production, science, energy, ecology and professional services. A workable relationship needs a customer, a capable provider, suitable assets, lawful rights and finance. The strategic task is to identify where those conditions can be assembled at proportionate cost. Listing reinforcing sectors does not establish a functioning economic system. [B12, B15]

The Blueprint's time horizons describe a proposed maturation path. Toward 2030, logistics services, cold chains, certification and selective nearshoring build operational capability while suitable ocean pilots generate learning. Toward 2035, specialised processing, ocean food and connected production can deepen where

evidence supports them. The 2050 horizon gives greater weight to science, intellectual property, ocean materials, data services and nature-based assets. These horizons express strategic sequencing; the speed of each industry depends on its own technical, ecological and commercial development. [B12.4, B12.13-B12.14, B15]

The starting portfolio builds from maritime services, fish handling and Freeport activities with existing customer interfaces. These can support deeper skills and stronger suppliers while research-led ventures develop against scientific milestones and suitable access rights. The ten engines connect through the AIC2030 productive loop: Create, Transform, Retain, Circulate, Reinvest and Compound. For Port Louis, that loop becomes concrete when an ocean activity generates useful city work, firms improve their competence, and earnings sustain the next operation. Ocean governance protects the resource and its users; diplomacy supports reciprocal relationships; enterprises and institutions perform the work. [B9-B15, B23; D]

Figure 8. Ocean development as a productive system

Industrial cluster	Paid work and city interface	Capability sought
Logistics services **Engines 1-2**	Consolidation, refrigeration, packaging, certification and fulfilment through maritime and Freeport services.	Quality, margins and repeat access.
Nearshoring **Engine 3**	Finishing, assembly and selected processing matched to a buyer, workforce and lawful facility.	Production skills, brands and methods.
Ocean food **Engine 5**	Lawful fishing, aquaculture, seaweed, processing, laboratories and cold chains.	Safe products, traceability and skilled suppliers.
Biotechnology **Engine 6**	Research, compounds, enzymes and materials; vessels, samples and laboratory links.	Validated science, fair knowledge benefits and intellectual property.
Professional services **Engine 10**	Repair, engineering, insurance, law, independent arbitration, compliance and digital services.	Specialist firms, technicians and dependable recourse.

ENERGY AND FUELS: 7	ECOLOGICAL ASSETS: 8	OCEAN INTELLIGENCE: 9
Test resources, offtake, safe handling, lifecycle costs and national supply benefits.	Protect and restore habitats. Credits require valid methods, rights and measured outcomes.	Observations, cables, sensors and analytics must improve a decision under lawful data access.

ENGINE 4: MADAGASCAR-MAURITIUS CO-DEVELOPMENT

Connect the clusters through agreed productive roles, rights, skills and benefits at origin and in Mauritius.

Production and research may belong elsewhere in the Republic or in partner territories. Tropical medicine retains its own scientific scope. Readiness differs across industries; no ten-project programme is implied. Sources: chapter 7; [B9-B15; P9].

Ocean space and Blue Special Economic Zones

Marine spatial planning begins with jurisdiction, ecology and existing use. Navigation, fishing, aquaculture, energy, research, cables, conservation and coastal livelihoods may overlap. A new use can displace others or impose costs outside its revenue chain. The planning process must expose those conflicts and provide a way to hear them. Unallocated sea space is not vacant investment land. [B9.3-B9.5]

The World Bank’s marine spatial planning toolkit treats planning as an integrated process connecting environmental and social conditions with investment. Its guidance includes enabling conditions, implementation, monitoring and economic analysis. The implication is practical: the alternatives, displaced

uses, distribution of benefits and cost of administration belong in a Blue SEZ appraisal before designation. Better-defined access can reduce uncertainty, but that does not make every proposed use environmentally acceptable or commercially viable. A zone must improve on the arrangements it would replace. [E6]

The Blueprint also proposes ocean leasing and concessions as a way to grant defined access to specific activities while retaining public authority over maritime space. An offshore energy site, an aquaculture area and a subsea cable corridor would require different rights, durations, duties and exit arrangements. A credible arrangement would identify the legal basis and competent authority, environmental conditions, monitoring obligations, community interests, performance requirements and restoration or decommissioning responsibility. Access to marine biological resources would additionally raise research, intellectual property and benefit-sharing questions. These are design questions for the relevant Mauritian institutions under applicable law; the Blueprint does not itself establish a concession regime or confer rights on any investor. [B9.5-B9.6, B10]

This spatial and legal layer is what connects ocean development to custodianship. It can make a legitimate project investable because its permissions and limits are known. It can also rule out a project where an ecological function, an existing livelihood or a conflicting use cannot be protected. Port Louis may supply the maritime service, science connection, data record or investment interface for an authorised activity. It does not become the authority that allocates ocean space throughout the Republic. Rodrigues and other affected communities must enter the choice through their own institutions and rights, rather than appearing only as locations on a national opportunity map. [B9, B11, B23]

The Blueprint's proposed Blue Special Economic Zones, or Blue SEZs, provide possible locations and governance structures for some of these activities. Their 3-5-10 horizon proposes three prototype poles by 2030, five in a wider network by 2035 and ten in a mature system by 2050. These numbers are a strategic sequence for testing and learning, not a count of designated zones today. The draft national policy paper describes a broad typology including waterfront services, fisheries, science, medicine, transformation, energy, digital systems and training. A site should be selected because its function, ecology, institutions and commercial users fit together. A label or tax treatment alone creates no industrial pole. [B10, P9]

The Blueprint distinguishes a port-anchored type, a nearshore or coastal type and an offshore type. It associates Port Louis with the first, and discusses Rodrigues and other places as possible settings for different functions. These are reference designs, not existing legal designations or permission to occupy marine space. The proposed landlord logic separates public stewardship and regulation from private operation and requires assets to be phased and reversible where possible. A Blue SEZ is an economic instrument; it is neither an ocean authority nor a diplomat. Its purpose is to make a particular development activity governable and testable within the wider custodial framework. [B10]

The Port Louis port-anchored Blue SEZ is the Blueprint's most specific city application. It is an integrated economic interface anchored in the harbour, rather than a resort waterfront, tax preference or newly renamed container terminal. Four value chains are meant to meet there: maritime and trade operations; blue governance, compliance and ecological measurement; blue services, finance and risk; and intelligence, data and corridor systems. The claim is that operations generate usable flows, standards and verification make those flows more trusted, professional services help translate them into financeable transactions, and intelligence improves the next decision. If any one chain fails, mere co-location is insufficient (Table 11). [B7.9.1-B7.9.2]

Table 11. Four value chains for a port anchored Blue SEZ

Possible transactions and capabilities retained if successful

Port Louis Blue SEZ value chain	Possible working transaction	Capability retained if successful
Maritime and trade operations	A scheduled short sea or way-port service connects with Freeport transformation and compliant onward movement	Repeatable handling, suppliers and viable commercial connections
Governance, compliance and ecology	Credible emissions, biodiversity, safety or product records accompany the transaction	Trusted verification and enforceable environmental practice
Services, finance and risk	A firm, insurer, financier and chosen dispute forum price an actual contractual obligation	Skilled professional work and clearer allocation of risk
Intelligence and data	Port, ocean and market information improve schedules, resilience or investment decisions with protected access	Reusable knowledge and more reliable choices

Source: Blueprint value chains, interpreted through the city economic model. [B7.9.1-B7.9.2, B10; D]

The zone perimeter must be explicit. The Blueprint excludes terminal operation, berth allocation, labour management and carrier negotiations from the Port Louis Blue SEZ's governance remit, while elsewhere listing terminals among possible connected assets. The consistent interpretation is economic connection without transfer of operational or statutory control. A final design must specify that separation in law and contracts. Neither MPA's powers nor CHCL's functions pass to a new body through designation. [B7.9.3, B10.4]

For a Blue SEZ, functional integrity requires ecological systems, economic activity, trade and connectivity, digital intelligence and data, and custodial governance. These five functions define how the proposed zone must work. The six operating layers in chapter 5 provide the wider account of capabilities supporting the city economy. Applied to a zone, that account can connect onshore services and laboratories, an accessible waterfront, nearshore research or cultivation, and offshore research or infrastructure where justified. Development can begin with the functions and physical interfaces needed by a specific user, supported by suitable rights, ecological capacity, assets, an operator and finance. [B10.6-B10.6.2]

The 3-5-10 sequence has named but unapproved reference nodes. The Blueprint suggests Port Louis, Rodrigues and a restricted-access Agaléga offshore concept for the first three; St Brandon and another differentiated node appear in the later five-node horizon. The outer-island proposals raise distinct local-interest, ecological, security and operational questions. Their inclusion in a strategic roadmap does not designate territory, authorise an activity or imply that one institution in Port Louis can decide on their behalf. These locations should be treated as hypotheses to be examined with responsible authorities and affected communities. [B10.10]

The Blueprint's Charter excludes speculative seabed banking, resort-led development, bundled mega-projects without sequencing, presumed extraction and state operation of commercial assets. Its landlord-style design separates the public authority that sets rights and safeguards from firms that build and operate commercial assets; it also rejects an actor regulating and monetising the same ecological or data asset. A credible first Blue SEZ would therefore be a portfolio of lawful transactions and capabilities with a defined public boundary, rather than a map coloured blue. This makes the zone a concrete test of the Custodial Ocean Economy: continuity of service, conversion into productive work, recourse under independent law and renewal of both firms and marine systems. [B10.8-B10.9]

The first Port Louis prototype can be framed as a marine services and seafood assurance interface for investigation. It would test whether shared technical verification, laboratory access, protected data, supplier training and professional risk services can raise the quality and local value of existing ship-service and fish chains. This is an analytical candidate, not a site allocation, approved project or merger of the two industries. The initial perimeter should be functional: named contracts and uses of existing facilities. No maritime space or private facility is assigned to a new zone by writing it into the monograph. The legal perimeter, if ever justified, would follow a competent public process and an environmental baseline (Table 12). [B7.9-B10; O11-O13, O15]

Table 12. Tests for a first Blue SEZ prototype

Prototype question	First evidence	Decision if evidence fails
Is there a paying use?	Customer commitments for repair, testing, cold-chain verification or other specified services	Keep the firms' existing operations; do not designate a zone
Is there lawful and workable access?	Facility rights, licences, port permissions, worker access and any necessary environmental clearance	Redesign the interface or find another site
Does it deepen domestic capability?	Contracts, skilled labour, supplier margins, training and repeat orders after imported inputs	Retain services that work and reject the zone claim
Does the ocean remain governable?	Catch and origin records where relevant, safety practice, water and waste baseline, affected users and monitoring	Refuse or constrain the activity, irrespective of forecast revenue
Can it survive without a new public liability?i	Asset owner, operator, contract, finance, risk allocation, enforcement and exit costs	Run a smaller reversible service experiment or stop

Source: Author's prototype appraisal. [B7.9-B10; O11-O13, O15]

The four value chains in the Blueprint need not be placed under one operator. Existing firms and institutions can supply parts of them on contract while public authorities retain their mandates. Ébène can help with insurance, finance and legal services for a viable transaction; Mauritius International Arbitration Centre (MIAC) or another chosen forum can handle an arbitrable dispute independently; research institutions can test ecological and technical claims. The proposed zone should not duplicate a working Freeport facility or disguise a subsidy to one incumbent. A prototype would be worth developing only if these relationships solve a measured customer and public-interest problem that the existing legal and commercial arrangements cannot solve as well. [B7.9-B10, B22, P9]

Consider a proposed seafood assurance service providing specified testing and traceability support to existing producers and processors. Its purpose would be to remove a demonstrated barrier to buyer acceptance or dependable fulfilment. Users must first show which service they cannot obtain adequately through current arrangements. The relevant alternatives are existing laboratories, procedural improvement, contracted specialist capacity and investment by individual firms. A zone is justified only if its distinct arrangements improve the outcome after their administrative and public costs.

Illustrative annual service sensitivity using assumed fees, costs and demand. Assume fixed cost of USD 36,000, a fee of USD 100 per accepted test and variable cost of USD 40 per test. Break-even is 600 tests. At 900 tests the simplified operating surplus is USD 18,000; at 450 tests it is a USD 9,000 loss. The cost basis would need to include equipment use, qualified staff, accreditation, quality control, waste treatment and maintenance. Tax,

financing and investment needs require additional appraisal, and different tests will have different costs and capacity requirements.

Users will purchase testing only where its result is accepted and useful. Fees must be compared with avoided rejection, spoilage, delay or duplication, after allowing for sampling and turnaround. Accepted tests transferred from another competent provider are not automatically new economic output or a development gain. Additionality may instead lie in a previously unserved producer reaching a buyer, shorter acceptance time, new technical competence or independently demonstrated improvement in quality.

A successful assurance service would establish one useful interface. It would not, by itself, justify Blue SEZ designation, other ocean industries or the 3-5-10 sequence. A zone must show a further advantage over ordinary contracts and existing institutions. Aquaculture, biotechnology and energy would each need separate evidence of lawful access, ecological capacity, technical performance and demand.

The first ocean development choices should be made from demonstrable interfaces: an existing maritime service that can deepen skills and reliability; a food chain with buyer demand, safe handling and sustainable sourcing; or a research-led venture with lawful access and a credible path to application. Each requires its own commercial and ecological baseline. The port may supply a berth, laboratory connection, service market or data interface; it does not make the underlying science or market viable by itself. This is how the ten-engine proposition can become a selective development programme rather than a simultaneous list of aspirations. [B9-B15, B27]

The Africa I See introduces the Blue SEZ by treating the ocean as a productive geography. The instrument requires a more exact foundation: defined rights, valid permissions, scientific evidence and accountable treatment of competing uses. The Blueprint and draft policy develop those conditions. Here the idea remains a proposed instrument whose legal design and suitability must be established for each application. [T, pp. 110-112; B9-B10; P9]

The city connection is immediate. Port Louis should host or connect only those activities for which the harbour, Freeport and urban skill base provide an advantage. Some ocean science or aquaculture work will naturally belong elsewhere in Mauritius or in partner territories. The corridor is a distributed economic system. A custodian city need not monopolise its productive geography.

Figure 9. A port-anchored Blue Special Economic Zone

FIVE REQUIRED FUNCTIONS

Ecological systems; economic activity; trade and connectivity; digital intelligence and data; custodial governance.

1. MARITIME AND TRADE

Usable flows and productive services. Connected terminal assets retain their proper operational and statutory control.

2. GOVERNANCE AND ECOLOGY

Credible standards, verification and ecological measurement; independent oversight and competent regulation.

3. FINANCE AND RISK

Authorised services support defined cash flows and named obligations, loss bearers and remedies.

4. INTELLIGENCE AND DATA

Useful records and analysis, with lawful access, integrity and correction. Avoid regulating and monetising the same asset.

OPERATIONAL BOUNDARY

The proposed zone excludes terminal operation, berth allocation, labour management and carriers' commercial negotiations. Existing powers and rights remain with their holders.

2030: THREE PROTOTYPES

Port Louis, Rodrigues and a restricted-access Agaléga concept are reference hypotheses, each requiring a competent process.

2035: FIVE NODES

A differentiated network; St Brandon and another node appear in the later Blueprint horizon.

2050: TEN NODES

A strategic aspiration conditional on learning, lawful rights, local interests and demonstrated purpose.

FIRST CANDIDATE AND DECISION TEST

Investigate marine-service and seafood assurance using existing facilities. Compare ordinary contracts and laboratories before designation. Specify users, ecology, rights, operator, finance, data and exit.

Onshore, waterfront, nearshore and offshore interfaces are options, not a requirement to build all four. Exclude speculative seabed banking, resort-led development, presumed extraction and unsequenced mega-projects. Sources: chapter 7; [B7.9, B10; P9].

8 Governing and negotiating the shared sea

Port Louis can help keep a shared sea usable through lawful national stewardship and consent-based diplomacy. Its authority ends where another sovereign partner's authority begins.

Governance makes ocean uses lawful and accountable; diplomacy makes cross-border cooperation workable. Firms need valid access, accepted records and credible recourse before committing people and capital. Port Louis provides a setting where those institutional functions meet maritime enterprise. Mauritius acts through competent authorities, and partners retain their own decisions. The Blueprint's governance without hegemony succeeds where dependable practice makes voluntary cooperation useful. [B9, B14, B23; P13-P14]

Consider an aquaculture proposal. Suitable water alone does not establish an industry. A competent authority needs evidence about ecological capacity and existing uses; a firm needs a valid right, skills, inputs and a buyer; port services must handle equipment and product; finance needs a credible production and sales cycle. If research, seed supply, certification or export markets involve another jurisdiction, agreed procedures may be needed there too. Governance makes the site and responsibilities dependable; diplomacy makes the cross-border interfaces workable; enterprise performs the productive activity. Success leaves trained people, reusable scientific records, stronger suppliers and earnings for reinvestment while protecting the marine system

on which the next cycle depends. This is an illustrative application of the Blueprint, requiring site-specific evidence and willing users. [B9-B12, B23; P9, P13-P14]

The Blueprint separates three governance spaces. Within Mauritian jurisdiction, the State exercises its own legal powers through competent authorities. Across a regional corridor, partners may voluntarily agree protocols on schedules, safety, data, environmental practice or emergency continuity. At the convening level, Port Louis may offer a neutral place for ports, carriers, regulators, firms and communities to solve a defined problem. These spaces must not be merged. A useful port-to-port protocol cannot amend another state's law; an Institute dialogue cannot issue a binding maritime rule; and a sovereign regulator cannot delegate its public duty merely because coordination would be convenient. [B23.3, P13-P14]

The Blueprint's later proof-of-custodianship sequence gives this distinction an operational test. It proposes a voluntary feeder-governance protocol for schedule transparency, fair access and comparable reporting; a capital reference protocol that separates fiduciary duties from claims of custodial authority; non-intrusive testing of failures where port, regulatory, digital and financing systems meet; and a confidential, voluntary way to clarify disputed environmental or compliance information. None requires Port Louis to operate a partner's vessel, allocate another port's capacity, direct investment or issue a binding judgment. The test is whether actors use a modest shared practice when a real problem arises and continue using it without constant sponsorship. [B85]

Ocean diplomacy becomes credible through particular bargains. A Madagascar-linked service could address reciprocal cargo access, producer value and rules for handling data. An island connection could address minimum continuity, vessel suitability and fair sharing of costs. Cooperation on marine science could specify research access, intellectual property and benefit sharing. A disruption protocol could identify who communicates a changed berth window, how essential goods are prioritised under applicable law and how counterpart authorities respond. Each arrangement needs willing parties, lawful mandates and a clear benefit; the name Blue Corridor alone binds no one. [B18, B20, B23, P13, I]

A first Madagascar service could use a narrow voluntary operating protocol, agreed by the competent ports, customs and inspection bodies, participating shipowner and consenting commercial users. It would record the published sailing and connection windows, the documents and inspection result each side accepts, the contact who acts when a vessel misses a window, permitted uses of commercially sensitive data, and a route for resolving a contested charge or damaged consignment under the parties' contracts and applicable law. A producer representative should be able to challenge a value-completion arrangement that removes activity from origin without an agreed gain. The protocol should report aggregated reliability and producer outcomes, permit revision or withdrawal on stated terms, and leave each state's regulatory authority intact. Its value would be established by actual users continuing to rely on it through a disruption, not by the ceremony of signature. [B18, B20, B23, B85; P13-P15]

The ocean in the Blueprint is a productive domain, a route, an ecological system and a space subject to law. Treating it only as vacant industrial territory would break the custodial claim. Fisheries, coastal settlements, marine life, navigation, cable routes, energy uses and conservation can overlap. Marine spatial planning is therefore a way to make choices and conflicts visible, not a device for declaring every square kilometre economically available. [B9, P9]

The fisheries ministry describes an EEZ of approximately 2.2 million square kilometres including Chagos, and separately a 396,000 square kilometre continental shelf co-managed with Seychelles. These are different resource regimes. The Chagos-inclusive figure must also be read with treaty status: a Government statement published on 14 October 2026 reported non-ratification. An area total does not establish present administrative control or investible access. [O22-O23, O26]

Official sources use different area conventions. The older 1.9 million EEZ plus joint-shelf aggregate differs from the NDC's 2.3 million EEZ description. This volume reports the fisheries ministry's figure without treating it as a delimitation finding. The relevant rights, authority and treaty implementation must be checked for each proposed activity; hectares of water are not a measure of industrial capacity. [O3, O22-O23, O26]

The source-to-sea responsibility

The Blueprint begins the corridor upstream of the harbour. Whole-of-water custodianship treats river basins, aquifers, lakes, wetlands, floodplains, urban and industrial water systems, deltas, coastal waters and the open ocean as a connected economic and ecological continuum. Water availability and quality, sediment, pollution, materials and waste transmit conditions from one part of that system to another. A dependable maritime interface cannot be sustained while the water systems supporting its production and coastal environment deteriorate. [B2.2, B3.2]

For Port Louis, source-to-sea responsibility enters everyday economic life. Freshwater reliability affects households, processing, workshops and ship supply. Wastewater, runoff and material leakage can damage coastal habitats and the working waterfront. Maintenance and flood protection have consequences for public access, neighbouring businesses and resident safety. Authorities need site-specific hydrological, ecological and social evidence before assigning a particular cost or intervention. [B2.2, B3.2]

A regional producer depends on land, water, energy and settlements before goods reach an African gateway. An ocean connection extends that productive geography. Port Louis can convene research and align useful records, but basin management, abstraction, land use, health and environmental enforcement remain with each territory's competent authorities. Whole-of-water scope enlarges the subject of cooperation while preserving jurisdictional boundaries. [B2.2-B2.3, B3.2-B3.3]

The city's proposed ocean role should therefore connect marine spatial planning to catchment and urban planning, water supply, wastewater treatment, coastal protection and the resilience of productive users. A project appraisal should identify the water and ecological dependencies of the activity, the responsible institutions, affected users and the consequences of failure. This allows source-to-sea governance to inform investment and continuity decisions alongside berth capacity and vessel schedules. It also explains why ocean diplomacy includes science and environmental cooperation as well as shipping arrangements. [B3.2, B9.3, B23]

Figure 10. A governed ocean, from source to sea

SOURCE-TO-SEA DEPENDENCIES

Catchments and aquifers; rivers, lakes and wetlands; urban and industrial water; coasts and the working waterfront; open ocean. Water, sediment and pollution connect these systems.

NATIONAL JURISDICTION	REGIONAL COOPERATION	NEUTRAL CONVENING
Competent authorities govern lawful uses, planning, safety, ecology and public decisions under applicable law.	Willing counterparts agree schedules, data, standards and emergency practice within their mandates.	Public bodies, firms, researchers and communities solve a defined problem. Convening confers no regulatory power.

EVIDENCE AND USERS	RIGHTS AND DUTIES
Map ecology, competing uses, water dependencies and affected communities.	Identify authority, lawful access, operator responsibilities and risk bearers.
MONITORING AND DATA	**REMEDY AND REVIEW**
Verify performance; protect access, integrity and correction rights.	Specify an independent forum, review, exit and restoration obligations.

MATCH RECOURSE TO THE DISPUTE

Existing courts exercise lawful jurisdiction. Arbitration requires a valid agreement. A specialist maritime court or list requires judicial and legislative assessment. Investment, interstate and UNCLOS disputes retain their separate regimes.

Source-to-sea scope does not extend Mauritian jurisdiction. Institutions retain independence; partner protocols preserve their laws. Sources: chapter 8; [B2.2, B3.2, B9, B14, B23, B65-B74; P12-P15; O7-O10, O16].

Nor is Mauritius's ocean geography reducible to the main island and its capital. Rodrigues and other island and maritime spaces have their own communities, ecological conditions and public interests. The Blueprint identifies Rodrigues as a possible regional relay and place of nearshore innovation. That is a proposition to be developed with its institutions and residents, not a peripheral service assigned from Port Louis. A national ocean system needs differentiated roles and fair representation across the Republic's geography. [B11]

The book gives this geography a lived dimension. It imagines travel and exchange among Mauritius, Rodrigues, Réunion and the wider Mascareignes as an encounter with a maritime civilisation, rather than a set of disconnected destinations. A future passenger or cruise circuit could express that idea if demand, vessels, ports, community benefit and environmental effects support it. Réunion is French territory and a partner geography, not part of Mauritian jurisdiction. Rodrigues has its own civic and institutional voice. The value of the image is to remind Port Louis that connection also moves people, knowledge and relationships; it is not evidence that the proposed circuit is already operating or commercially viable. [T, pp. 82, 110-111]

Mauritius has articulated a blue economy ambition that joins economic activity with ecological sustainability and social inclusion. The monograph takes that conjunction seriously. A marine biotechnology venture needs scientific governance and access rights; a new coastal facility may alter habitats; fuels infrastructure carries safety and spill risks; a blue carbon project may affect community use of a shoreline. Claims of climate benefit have to be measured against actual environmental and social effects. The ocean's limits are conditions of development, not an annex to it. [O1, B9-B13]

Climate change also changes the economics of port and coastal infrastructure. Sea-level exposure, storms, heat, altered fisheries and ecosystem loss affect operations and livelihoods. Resilience may require robust design, redundancy, knowledge and maintenance. It cannot be inferred from the adjective green . The Blueprint's

insistence on modularity, intelligence and nature-based resilience is a useful direction, provided specific sites and assets receive ecological and financial scrutiny. [B28, O2]

The World Bank's Mauritius Country Climate and Development Report provides a country-specific external reference: it connects coastal protection and a climate-resilient Port Louis with marine spatial planning, legal reform and water management. These are connected economic dependencies. An ocean proposal should therefore state how its site, water needs and service obligations fit the country's adaptation priorities, while identifying the institution responsible for each risk. The report supplies a policy and investment context; a project still needs its own engineering and environmental assessment. [E5]

Mauritius exercises its own maritime and institutional authority within applicable law; cooperation with other states rests on their consent and the relevant international frameworks. Chapter 10 sets out the proposed national functions and their mandate test. The diplomatic task here is to connect competent counterparts around a specific purpose: safety, scientific exchange, recognised records, continuity or standards that participants find useful. [B14, B23; P13-P14]

Reciprocal agreements may address science, standards, disruption or investment preparation. Their credibility depends on counterparties retaining productive rights, control over legitimate data uses, independent recourse and freedom to choose another route. Confidentiality and withdrawal terms should be explicit. These practical choices give the Blueprint's non-dominance principle substance. [B23, B49; P13, P18]

Figure 11. Ocean diplomacy earned through use

Agreement	What partners settle	Evidence of usefulness
Madagascar trade	Connection windows, accepted records, producer terms and data permissions.	Reliable delivery and better producer outcomes against alternatives.
Island continuity	Minimum service, vessel suitability, duties and cost sharing.	Agreed service at sustainable cost.
Marine science	Research access, samples, data, intellectual property and benefit sharing.	Authorised work, reusable knowledge and agreed benefits.
Disruption response	Changed windows, essential-trade procedures and response contacts.	Coordinated action and continued essential connections.

A PRACTICAL MADAGASCAR PROTOCOL

Agree six items: sailing windows; accepted records; disruption contacts; data permissions; recourse; joint aggregate reporting.

FOUR VOLUNTARY PRACTICES

Feeder coordination; capital-reference and fiduciary separation; non-intrusive interface tests; confidential technical clarification. None confers operating, investment or judicial command.

DECLINE AND RETAIN

Choose participation; preserve productive and data rights and alternative routes.

CHALLENGE AND REVISE

Seek independent recourse, question an unfair value split, and revise or withdraw on stated terms.

THE TEST

Repeated use through disruption, stronger partner outcomes and less dependence on exceptional support.

Competent ports, public bodies, firms and communities retain their respective roles. Proposed practices, not signed arrangements. Sources: chapter 8; [B18, B20, B23, B49, B85; P13-P15, P18].

The policy paper also gives continuity a security dimension. Navigation safety, lawful port-state functions, emergency response, cybersecurity and protection of essential trade interfaces sit with the competent national bodies. Cooperation can connect their response procedures to partner ports and commercial operators during disruption. Predictable authority and usable crisis communication make the gateway dependable without converting a voluntary regional protocol into enforcement over another state. [B23.4, B28; P5, P15]

Port Louis can also contribute reference practices that others adopt because they work: a model short sea service agreement, a shared reporting vocabulary, a green operations benchmark or a port cooperation protocol. The Blueprint calls these corridor norms rather than treaties. Their value depends on use, mutual revision and compatibility with each participant's law. They must leave room for a partner to propose a different standard or withdraw from a voluntary arrangement. Ocean diplomacy is sustained by trust earned repeatedly, not by the unilateral publication of a model. [B23.5]

The foundational doctrine distinguishes a productive map, showing where value is created and connected, from a strategic map, showing how sovereign interests are advanced. The distinction matters in the Indian Ocean. A useful shipping and processing chain may connect several territories economically, but it does not erase their different laws, negotiating positions or public priorities. Port Louis can propose a connection only where both

maps make sense: the transaction must work for producers and customers, and the agreement must be acceptable to the states and communities whose interests it touches. [D, pp. 27-29]

That productive map should name differentiated functions, not draw every valuable activity into the capital. Port Louis may supply maritime access, services and a diplomatic interface; the Freeport may undertake a paid transformation; Ébène may provide financing and professional capacity. Rodrigues, other Mauritian territories and sovereign partner ports may develop different combinations of production, science, marine services and community knowledge. Their roles cannot be assigned from Port Louis. For any proposed chain, the map should show the chosen function of each place, the value produced there, its decision rights and the physical and legal links to other nodes. Complementarity is credible when the participants can negotiate and, where necessary, decline it. [D, pp. 25-29; B11, B23]

Law, information and trust

Movement can succeed while the transaction fails. A cargo record may not satisfy an insurer; a certificate may be rejected; payment may stall; rerouting may expose ambiguity in a contract. The proposed governance spine addresses those interfaces through usable standards, professional competence and escalation procedures. It requires institutions to understand one another’s records and duties. [B2, B13-B14, B65-B74]

Trade facilitation should therefore join border practice to the larger economic chain. Risk-based customs and inspection can reduce delay while preserving sovereign control. Regulatory interoperability means that separate authorities understand and recognise the information they actually need; it does not require them to become one regulator. A digital record can improve confidence if its source, permitted uses, correction rights and security are clear. A data platform without those protections could reproduce the very distrust it is intended to cure. [B65-B74, P12]

The draft national policy paper treats measurement, reporting and verification as trust infrastructure and rejects corridor intelligence as surveillance. A useful operating system would report schedule reliability, cargo status, compliance and environmental performance at levels appropriate to each participant. Rival carriers should not see one another's sensitive bookings through a shared operator. Producers should know who may use their data. Public agencies require access for lawful purposes; private actors require protection of legitimate commercial information. Governance of information is thus part of fair access, not an optional technology package. [P12, B34, I]

The legal service economy deserves a place in the city's architecture. The Blueprint calls arbitration and dispute resolution a core economic function and says trust requires recourse. The draft national policy paper calls legal predictability and arbitration economic infrastructure. A ship call, feeder service, Freeport transformation contract, marine insurance policy and ocean concession can each produce a different dispute. Competent jurisdiction and a trustworthy forum affect whether firms will sign, insure, finance and repeat those transactions. Their quality should be judged through actual contracts, cases, time, cost, enforcement and perceived impartiality. [B13.10, B73, P14]

Mauritius is not starting from zero. The Supreme Court already includes a Commercial Division. The International Arbitration Act supplies a framework for international arbitration, and the Mauritius International Arbitration Centre, located at the Port Louis waterfront, offers dispute-resolution services. Its institutional independence must be protected: it should not be depicted as an arm of the port, the Freeport, Ébène or AIC2030. These existing functions should be mapped before proposing any new court or centre (Table 13). [O7-O9]

Table 13. Maritime law and arbitration pathways

Question	Credible Port Louis pathway	Boundary to preserve
Domestic maritime litigation	Examine whether the Supreme Court should develop a specialist maritime and admiralty list, trained judicial capacity and procedures appropriate to shipping, marine insurance, port contracts and lawful ocean use	Any dedicated court or jurisdictional change belongs to Mauritius's constitutional and legislative processes and an independent judiciary
Private cross-border commerce	Strengthen professional maritime, trade, finance and investment arbitration and mediation through existing and competing institutions, with parties choosing a valid forum	Arbitration rests on an enforceable agreement and law; an institution cannot compel non-parties to submit
Foreign commercial litigation	Study whether a specialist international commercial list within the Mauritian judiciary would attract consenting parties, with clear rules on jurisdiction, language, evidence and enforcement	Foreign litigants and states do not become subject to Mauritian courts by the city's declaration; public-law and treaty disputes have their own regimes
Inter-state law of the sea disputes	Build Mauritian legal and diplomatic capability to participate competently in recognised UNCLOS processes	Port Louis cannot establish a unilateral international maritime tribunal or replace the jurisdiction of ITLOS or other competent mechanisms

Source: Existing legal institutions and the author's proposed development pathways. [O7-O9, O16; B13.10, B73; P14]

A Maritime Affairs Court is one option for developing specialist capacity. A judicially led inquiry should compare it with a maritime or admiralty list within existing courts and with strengthened arbitration and mediation. It should establish caseload, delay, expertise, procedures, cost, appeal and enforcement, hearing judges, the Bar, shipowners, seafarers, marine insurers, port users and environmental interests. A specialist international commercial list could also be studied where consenting parties may validly choose Mauritius. These routes depend on applicable law and independent judicial and legislative decisions. [O7-O9, O16]

The boundaries between forms of recourse must remain clear. Private commercial arbitration requires a valid agreement; domestic litigation requires competent jurisdiction; investment treaty and state-to-state disputes have separate regimes; United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) processes cannot be replaced by a unilateral Mauritian tribunal. Party demand, affordable access for small suppliers and the ability to obtain independent technical evidence should shape the choice. Strengthening existing institutions and procedures would be a substantive result if that meets the demonstrated need. [B13.10, B73; P14; O7-O10, O16]

Trusted recourse is an economic capability. Surveyors establish technical evidence; independent arbitrators decide disputes submitted to them; courts exercise lawful jurisdiction; regulators enforce public law; insurers assess covered losses. Port Louis can develop the lawyers, mediators, accountants, scientists and translators these processes require. Their value depends on competence, independence, enforceability and access for weaker parties. A predictable adverse outcome can preserve confidence in the next transaction as much as a successful delivery can (Table 14). [B13.10, B73; P14; O8-O9]

Digital cooperation provides a documented institutional comparison. The World Bank's port-community-systems work treats coordination, governance, legal arrangements and financing as part of implementation. Portbase's own 2025 report records 7,200 participating organisations, 34,000 users and 99.83

per cent platform availability, alongside stakeholder consultations and tighter security requirements. These operator-reported measures show a service that can be examined through adoption and reliability; they do not establish the net welfare gain of a Mauritian replica. Port Louis should begin with a specific failed exchange and compare improvement through existing systems with the cost and governance of a new one. [E7; E9]

Table 14. Options for strengthening specialist legal capacity

Institutional option	Evidence in its favour	Constraint or reason to defer
Improve existing procedures and specialist training	A small or mixed caseload with identifiable delay, expertise or access problems	Should not be sold as a new jurisdiction
Establish a maritime list within the Supreme Court	A sufficient recurring caseload and demonstrable benefit from judicial specialisation	Judicial independence, staffing, procedural law and appeals need review
Establish a separate Maritime Affairs Court	Sustained volume and case complexity beyond what an existing court can manage	Highest statutory and institutional burden; no case established here
Strengthen independently administered arbitration and mediation	Parties voluntarily choose Mauritius and institutions show demand and enforceability	Private agreement cannot replace public adjudication or bind non- parties
Study an international commercial list	Foreign parties have a legal path to choose Mauritian courts and value its procedure and enforcement	Jurisdiction, recognition abroad, legal profession capacity and treaty boundaries require specialist advice

Source: Author's comparison of institutional options. [O7-O9, O16; B73; P14] Proposals remain subject to applicable law and independent institutional decisions.

Part Five The institutions that make it endure

9 Port Louis and Ébène

Port Louis and Ébène are distinct cities in a connected national system. Capital, professional services and credible records can support the port city without displacing its public or maritime responsibilities.

Port Louis and Ébène perform complementary functions within one national economic system. The working harbour and administrative capital connect maritime continuity, enterprise, ocean governance and diplomacy. Ébène supplies financial, professional and technology capacity. Their value together is a transaction made more dependable: a producer funded appropriately, a vessel's risk understood, a supplier paid and an obligation enforceable. Each institution retains its own powers and duties. [B3.11, B5.7, B8, B22; P10-P11]

The Africa I See explains why the Ébène question became personal to this architecture. Work with Mauritius's International Financial Centre showed the author how a small jurisdiction could make institutional reliability valuable to investors. Work in African ports exposed how easily infrastructure, finance and technology were discussed in separate rooms. The gap suggested a role for Ébène beyond holding investment structures: understanding particular African enterprises and the capital needed to help their transactions repeat. The book argues that Mauritius must also understand the different practices of capital providers from Asia and the Gulf. Investor behaviour and actual deals would establish how those differences affect a particular transaction. [T, pp. 36-37, 72-73]

Trade finance is an early test. A viable producer may possess an order but lack the working capital to source inputs and ship. A lender needs reliable documents, a known buyer, enforceable rights, a plausible route and a way to handle loss. Shipping reliability can lower uncertainty, while better documentation may make a service more financeable. Neither causes the other automatically. The Blueprint's later capital chapters argue for finance as a participant in system formation, with pre-trade capital sometimes needed to establish interfaces before a stream of bankable receivables exists. That early money has risk and needs a named bearer. [B36-B45, P11]

For the Madagascar chain, the financing need changes as the transaction matures. Before shipment, a producer may require input or inventory finance against a credible buyer and purchase terms; that advance is exposed to production and performance risk. After inspection and dispatch, a verified receivable may support shorter-tenor finance, subject to buyer and country risk. The vessel owner faces a separate utilisation risk, including weak return loads, which a cargo loan cannot cure. A Freeport supplier may need equipment or working capital for a service with repeat customers. Insurance, documents, payment and independent recourse reduce uncertainty at different points, but none converts a weak route into a profitable one. Ébène's contribution would be to match each cash flow to a suitable instrument and loss bearer, disclose the terms, and allow early patient capital only within a bounded mandate. The State should not be treated as the residual guarantor merely because the corridor is strategically attractive. [B22, B36-B45; P4, P11; I]

Insurance and reinsurance can also influence route viability. Coverage may be available at a price a small exporter cannot bear, or claims may become disputed when records and contractual obligations differ. A credible Ébène role would improve documentary integrity and professional interpretation while allowing insurers to price rather than conceal risk. Cross-border payments and settlement affect how quickly a producer can be paid and reinvest. Asset management and longer-term capital may become relevant to facilities and fleets after a repeatable economic chain exists. The draft policy paper places these functions inside a fuller IFC proposition; it does not establish a sovereign guarantee for them. [B22, P11]

A large announced fund is not a substitute for investible transactions. Early market formation may justify patient capital, but its mandate, loss bearer and failure rules must be explicit. Fleet and terminal commitments can outlast the demand that supported them. The appraisal must therefore show who absorbs losses if traffic shifts, credit fails or an industry develops slowly. [B38-B44; I]

Public intervention needs a specific rationale. Joint scheduling may require coordination; research can create shared knowledge; facilities can have indivisible costs; environmental protection and essential continuity may generate public benefits. Each problem calls for an appropriate instrument and a comparison with feasible alternatives. A commercial loss alone establishes no public obligation to fund it.

This requirement has a current Mauritian counterpart. The World Bank’s 6 October 2026 summary of its Growth and Jobs Report places competition, infrastructure, skills and innovation incentives at the centre of the next growth phase. It specifically identifies independent regulation and private participation in network industries, including ports. That supports scrutiny of market structure and institutional capability alongside an asset transaction. It does not endorse a particular carrier agreement, fund or terminal. The monograph’s contribution is to connect these reform questions to named maritime and ocean chains. [E4]

Compare the proposed intervention with the least costly workable alternative. Convening may repair documentation without an office; a competitively procured continuity service may avoid State vessel ownership; a bounded research grant may support knowledge without recurring operating subsidy. Any public commitment needs a purpose, beneficiaries, ceiling, loss bearer, disclosure, review and exit. MBEIP’s legal structure cannot remove underlying project risk.

The distinction between mobilisation and exposure is central to sovereignty. Mauritius can make a lawful, reputable interface attractive to private capital without promising to absorb its losses. Regulatory integrity,

independent professional advice, clear data rights and disputes handled by competent bodies are productive assets. If Ébène is to be the other seat of the corridor, its success should be visible in firms financed, transactions completed, risk understood and capital reinvested, rather than in the headline amount of funds announced. [B22, P11]

Capital formation asks a further question. Can repeat orders help a producer accumulate earnings, equipment, reliable records and creditworthiness, so that the next order needs less exceptional support? Can a specialised Mauritian supplier reinvest its margin in technicians and equipment and win more than one customer? External investment and early patient capital may still be necessary, with a named bearer of loss. But the longer test for Ébène is whether finance builds firms in Mauritius and partner territories that can fund part of their own improvement. Announced funds and first transactions do not demonstrate that outcome. [D, p. 18; B36-B45]

The Blueprint gives this capital architecture a named instrument, MBEIP. Its proposed Mauritius-domiciled holding structure contains modular investment windows for blue ports and logistics infrastructure; shipping and short sea connectivity; blue value chains; and ocean transition and resilience. Investors would choose defined exposures within a common governance and risk framework. The platform's purpose includes African capital circulating across African markets, alongside international investment. Its four investment filters are real trade or contracted revenues, connection to the port, Freeport and International Financial Centre (IFC) system, measurable ESG alignment and potential replication across corridors. This is a proposed investment architecture whose legal form, regulation, participants and commercial mandate remain to be established. [B24.5-B24.9]

Blueprint chapter 25 distinguishes five ocean asset classes: ocean leases, concessions, infrastructure special purpose vehicles, nature and blue carbon assets, and ocean data and digital assets. Their legal containers are different. A lease defines permitted use and duration; a concession assigns operating duties and performance obligations; a special purpose vehicle (SPV) contains a project's cash flows and liabilities; a nature instrument requires verified ecological results and rights; a data licence governs permitted access and use. Public authority, restoration duties, oversight and remedies must remain identifiable in each. Port Louis connects the productive activity and maritime interface; Ébène supplies appropriate financial and professional capacity. A credible vehicle contains risk and rights without turning the ocean or a partner's sovereignty into something Mauritius can sell. [B25]

Four financing tiers and their sequencing

The four financing tiers classify economic purpose; the five asset classes classify rights and legal structures. They should not be treated as competing investment taxonomies. A lease, concession or SPV may serve more than one tier. Select the structure only after defining the activity, cash flows, duties and exposure. [B25, B39.3]

Tier 1, Core Corridor Assets, stabilises movement through port interfaces, transshipment and feeder systems, short sea networks, clearance and inspection, and climate-resilience or redundancy upgrades. Tier 2, Flow-Enabling Assets, converts movement into production through Blue SEZs, port-zone connections and inland logistics or consolidation. Tier 3, System Assets, supports continuity through data cables, centres, digital infrastructure, energy and redundancy. Tier 4, Capability and Knowledge Assets, sustains research, training, stewardship, intelligence and decision support. Each tier serves the others; financing one isolated asset cannot be presumed to complete the corridor. [B39.3]

The three Blue SEZ types in the financing framework are port-centric and logistics; industrial and trade processing; and digital, services and blue-economy innovation. These functional types should not be confused with the geographical three-prototype sequence in Blueprint chapter 10. A Port Louis investment case should establish both what a proposed asset does and how it fits a lawful site and operating chain. [B10.10, B39.3]

Short sea shipping is explicitly a Tier 1 operating network, not merely an ancillary service. Its asset case connects vessels, terminal interfaces, scheduling and digital coordination to flow stability, redundancy, port

integration and carbon and cost discipline. Validated interfaces and cargo commitments justify the particular commitment; repeated flows justify incremental conversion assets; intelligence and capability make later decisions better. The classification does not require every tier to be fully built before a useful trial begins. [B39.3-B39.5]

The Research and Intelligence Platform is assigned a role in curating the pipeline, validating flow-asset alignment, interpreting risk, supporting sequencing and preserving system coherence. Its evidence informs financiers; it does not replace their underwriting or create investment permissions. The Blueprint's indicative USD 5 to 8 billion baseline and USD 11 to 17 billion systemic-upside envelopes are corridor-level interpretive ranges for its 2026 to 2030 validation horizon. They are not verified capital commitments, a Mauritian expenditure programme or forecasts established by this monograph. [B39.1-B39.6]

Coherent operations and reliable records can make risk easier to assess. They do not replace underwriting of the buyer, cash flow, security and enforceability. Port Louis supplies the operational evidence; Ébène helps translate it into appropriate financial exposures. Successful capital formation is visible in viable firms and reinvestment. [D, pp. 17-22; B22]

The Custodial Capital Charter

The proposed Capital Charter sets a further boundary: capital may benefit from custodial coherence without being captured by the custodian. Allocation, pricing, underwriting and investment decisions remain with investors, lenders, insurers, development finance institutions and other authorised actors. The custodian supplies reference architecture, sequencing and continuity frameworks; it does not approve transactions or condition access to finance. Published principles on enforceability, data integrity, disclosure and stress-time protocols make risk more intelligible without becoming discretionary gatekeeping. [B2.13]

The Charter calls for periodic independent legal, financial and governance review of neutrality and non-capture. Non-exclusivity and voluntary exit protect participants from being bound to the custodial framework or penalised for not joining. These freedoms concern the framework; they do not erase obligations voluntarily undertaken in a separate valid commercial contract. This distinction allows cooperation to endure through usefulness while preserving counterparties' choices. [B2.13]

The no-implied-guarantee clause is equally explicit. Custodianship creates no sovereign guarantee, fiscal backstop or undertaking to absorb commercial, insurance, counterparty or force-majeure losses. Risk pricing and loss absorption remain with their named bearers. A separately authorised public investment or essential-service contract needs its own legal basis, budget, appraisal and disclosed exposure. Such a decision cannot derive financial authority from the corridor title, or turn the custodial function into an insurer of the system. [B2.15; P7, P18]

Figure 12. Two distinct cities, one productive relationship

PORT LOUIS: CUSTODIAN INTERFACE

Working harbour and administrative capital. Port continuity, ocean development, governance and diplomacy; Freeport work, suppliers and independent legal institutions.

ÉBÈNE: CAPITAL AND CONFIDENCE

A separate city supplying financial intelligence, insurance, technology and professional services through authorised actors. Neither city replaces the other's mandates.

THE CONNECTING TRANSACTION

Identify buyer and order, lawful rights and services, usable records, cash flows, risks and loss bearers. Partner territories retain their productive functions and decisions.

PRODUCER

Input or inventory finance before shipment; receivables after dispatch. Buyer and performance risks remain.

SHIPOWNER

A viable cycle and paid directional loads support vessel exposure. A cargo loan cannot cure utilisation risk.

FREEPORT SUPPLIER

Working capital or equipment finance must fit a priced service, repeat orders and a repayment path.

RESEARCH VENTURE

Patient capital follows scientific milestones and lawful access before receivables exist. Name the early-loss bearer.

ALLOCATION

Lenders, investors and insurers retain pricing and underwriting decisions.

NEUTRALITY

Non-exclusivity, review and voluntary framework exit protect participants; valid contracts still bind.

FISCAL BOUNDARY

Custodianship creates no State guarantee. Public support requires its own appraisal, budget and exposure.

TRANSACTION RESULT AND PRODUCTIVE YIELD

Complete orders and allocate risk; build firms, retain skills and reinvest earnings in Mauritius and partner territories.

A functional relationship, not a merger or hierarchy. Proposed MBEIP structures do not remove project risk. Sources: chapter 9; [B3.11, B5.7, B22, B24, B2.13-B2.15, B36-B45; P10-P11].

10 People, time and the Port Louis Compact

The test of the architecture is what residents, workers, firms and partners can carry into the next cycle, and which institutions can keep the system open and accountable.

Institutional memory is productive infrastructure. Network planners, engineers, operators, customs specialists, data stewards, scientists, lawyers and financiers must work across interfaces while preserving their separate mandates. The Blueprint's investment in learning and professional continuity is therefore part of the operating architecture. Assets cannot reproduce that competence by themselves. [B56-B64, B81-B82]

The doctrine identifies seven builder functions: capital, products, corridors, policy, knowledge, technology and narrative. They are useful here as a question of agency, not as seven proposed organisations. Who finances a demonstrable chain? Who produces and improves the goods? Who keeps its connection reliable? Who sets lawful rules, studies failures, maintains usable data and explains the public purpose honestly? A Port Louis programme without named people and institutions performing these functions remains a diagram. The functions cross professional and national boundaries; no single city can claim to own them. [D, pp. 30-32]

Knowledge must accumulate alongside assets. The Africa I See argues for research before irreversible investment and for transmitting practitioner experience. Port Louis needs a durable record of route economics, urban effects, ocean science and experimental results that future institutions can use. Institute dialogue can convene that work; independent inquiry and a continuing local knowledge base give it endurance. [T, pp. 59-61, 71-72]

Maritime and Freeport work can provide connected pathways into scheduling, vessel operations, cold-chain assurance, standards, marine science, trade finance and risk. An operational employee may develop specialist expertise; a technician may supervise a team; a supplier may build a firm serving several customers. Such progression depends on employers, training, access to contracts, equipment and working capital. A fleet service can develop operational competence; a Freeport enterprise can become a supplier to multiple markets; applied research can solve recurring production and service problems. Port Louis's economic identity becomes tangible when people can learn, earn and build enterprises through these connections, carrying capability beyond a single terminal or administration. [B12, B56-B64, B81-B82]

Mobility is part of the system. Work and study exchange can help people operate common standards and solve problems across partner territories. The Blueprint argues for economic openness combined with political continuity, rights and rule of law. That is a delicate national choice and should be described without reducing people to inputs. A corridor must be capable of moving goods, services and knowledge across borders while respecting each state's labour, immigration and civic decisions. [B2, B31]

Air connectivity supports the maritime system where engineers, researchers, decision makers, samples and time-sensitive services must travel. The Blueprint's sea-air relationship should be tested through those actual journeys: which connections matter, how dependable they are and what improvement their users will pay for or the public interest requires. [B31.5]

The city itself should be able to recognise this future. Maritime and ocean careers need visibility to young Mauritians. Training should join employers, educational institutions and public agencies around observed skill shortages rather than produce credentials detached from jobs. Labour participation in port change matters particularly when shareholder or management arrangements may alter work practices. Skills retention and safety are strategic components of continuity. [B15, B59, I]

Training should be attached to demonstrated work. Repair facilities can support engineering apprenticeships; cold-chain firms can teach quality assurance; port and shipping operations can develop scheduling and safety competence; research institutions can connect observation to useful applications. Employers, educators and practitioners should agree the required skills and how to demonstrate them. Progress is visible when workers can carry competence into more demanding roles and other firms. [B12.10-B12.14, B59, B64, B81-B82]

The historical arc returns here. A port once built through coerced labour cannot earn the title of custodian by treating its present workers as replaceable machinery. An ocean city worthy of the name would measure its advancement in professional dignity, learning, mobility and enterprise as well as in vessel calls.

Institutions that sustain the ocean economy

Port Louis's administrative role is an economic asset when public decisions make maritime activity dependable. Recognised documents, predictable permissions, workable standards and credible dispute resolution reduce uncertainty for firms. Ocean development also depends on reconciling access, environmental responsibilities and competing uses. Diplomatic engagement supports agreements with regional partners. As administrative capital and port city, Port Louis connects these national functions with the commercial problems encountered at the harbour and in its enterprises. The resulting value appears in reliable service, reduced avoidable delay and firms able to undertake more complex work. Statutory and judicial powers remain with the competent national authorities and independent institutions. Ébène's capital and professional role complements this maritime and administrative foundation. [B3.11, B5.7, B8.5, B23; P4-P5, P13-P14]

The early-2026 sources propose several institutional functions. The Blueprint names a Mauritius Ocean Authority, a Port and Maritime Development Council, blue finance and ocean governance and diplomacy functions. The Blueprint and policy paper also propose a Port Louis Blue Corridor Custodian Office; the policy assigns proposed roles to MPA, CHCL, MSCL and Economic Development Board (EDB). Their relationship to existing powers is the starting question for implementation. [B7.6.2, B28; P5]

The governing principle is separation with coordination. MPA's landlord and regulatory responsibilities cannot be wished away by a new corridor title. A terminal operator manages operations within lawful rights. A shipping company takes commercial decisions. Financial regulators govern financial conduct. Ministries and Cabinet retain political authority. A custodial function can connect evidence, standards and voluntary partners, but should not quietly acquire powers that belong elsewhere. The first implementation task is to map mandates, overlaps, conflicts and legal changes before drafting new offices. [P4-P5, I]

The custodial non-conversion rule

Port Louis's custodial identity is expressed through its wider economic and institutional offering. Terminal operators, shipowners, Freeport firms, researchers, financial and legal professionals, courts and arbitration institutions perform distinct work within it. The standing custodial function preserves coherent, neutral and dependable interfaces while those actors retain their lawful powers. This is the Blueprint's proposed constitutional separation between stewardship and operational, financial or judicial authority. [B2.12, B3.11, B32.3-B32.6]

The non-conversion clause excludes enforcement, sanctioning, discrimination among flags or counterparties, binding directives, transaction eligibility decisions, contract reinterpretation and adjudication by the custodian. It also excludes surveillance and substitution for sovereign, military, judicial, regulatory or commercial authority. Custodial information should support voluntary coherence and stress-time continuity without collecting rivals' commercial intelligence. A function that starts allocating berths, licensing operators, directing cargo or deciding disputes has crossed the boundary the Blueprint sets. [B2.12, B7.5.4, B32.3]

References to neutral arbitration under stress must be read alongside that exclusion. The custodian may help parties identify a failed interface or reach independent technical clarification where they consent. Binding arbitration, judicial orders, enforcement and interpretation of contractual rights remain with properly appointed independent arbitrators, courts and other competent bodies. A Maritime Affairs Court or stronger Mauritian arbitration capacity would therefore be part of the wider legal ecosystem, not an adjudicative arm of custodianship. [B2.12, B73, B84.4; P14]

The proposed institutional functions should be carried into that mapping explicitly. The policy paper's Port Louis Blue Corridor Custodian Office would coordinate convening, standards, measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), crisis protocols and intelligence while remaining non-regulatory, non-operational and non-financial. The proposed Mauritius Ocean Authority addresses marine spatial planning, ocean access and stewardship; the Port and Maritime Development Council provides long-horizon advice. The Blueprint also proposes data and intelligence, ocean governance, ocean diplomacy and blue finance functions, and a light non-executive Custodianship Council to preserve coherence and memory. These descriptions identify functions to reconcile with existing mandates. They should not be read as a requirement to establish a separate agency for every named function. [B13.12, B13.18, B28; P5.5-P5.7]

The EDB's proposed contribution is investment facilitation linked to Freeport transformation and Blue SEZ activity. MSCL's catalytic shipping role is addressed in chapter 4, alongside private Mauritian and African fleet participation. Customs and revenue services, maritime safety and security bodies, meteorological services, civil aviation and land transport authorities connect lawful clearance, risk information and physical access. The policy paper places Government direction above these interfaces while separating public authority from

commercial execution. The institutional account should show a responsible authority for each task, the operator's rights, the route for resolving conflicts and the public costs of implementation. [P5.1-P5.10]

The proposed national-interest and custodial alignment test is a practical way to keep decisions coherent. It asks whether an initiative strengthens continuity, serves African productive agency, preserves neutrality and non-dominance, protects sovereignty, maintains capital discipline, creates domestic value and respects climate and stewardship. A yes in one column should not erase a serious failure in another. An attractive commercial contract that blocks fair access cannot be called custodial; an ecologically damaging development cannot be rescued by counting jobs without addressing its effects. [P18]

The policy paper requires explicit Cabinet justification where a material initiative fails a national-interest safeguard; it does not describe automatic exclusion in every case. In the monograph, this preserves a visible decision about trade-offs, evidence and responsibility. A justified exception remains subject to applicable law and cannot silently change the foundational purpose. The endurance clause protects the governing principles across administrations, while routes, assets and institutional arrangements remain open to review as evidence changes. [P18.1, P18.5]

Institutional design must expose incentives and bargaining rights. Carriers seek network advantage; workers seek safe, skilled employment; firms seek customers; financiers seek manageable risk; producers seek better delivered outcomes. Their interests overlap without coinciding. CHCL terms, terminal plans and pilots should therefore state who decides, who benefits, who bears loss and which remedies remain available. [I]

Custodianship is especially necessary where no single institution governs the whole chain. If each authority performs only its narrow task, the producer can still lose the market through a failed interface. If a coordinating body claims power over the others, it risks capture and conflict with lawful mandates. The governing work is to establish shared standards, assign responsibility for a specific failure and preserve independent recourse. The doctrine's distinction between fragmentation and capture gives the proposed institutions a test more demanding than the creation of a new office. [D, pp. 18-19; B28]

Begin with the smallest lawful arrangement that solves a repeated problem. A documentation, scheduling or crisis protocol can earn adoption through use. A council without a defined task can add delay. Extend coordination only where performance and institutional memory justify the additional scope. [B32, B46, B77]

Installing a standing function without centralised control

The Blueprint seeks more than a sequence of consultation events. It proposes a standing stewardship function that can survive changes in leadership, political cycles and commercial networks. Blueprint chapter 77 identifies architectural integrity, sequencing discipline, stress coordination and system memory as its continuing tasks. Its practical value is to preserve compatible interfaces when individually successful ports, standards systems and capital platforms begin to fragment their shared environment. This is the risk of uncoordinated success that the Blueprint places at the centre of its later chapters. [B77, B83]

The proposed first installation phase defines scope and exclusions, a lean doctrine-anchored operating entity, the required capabilities and legal recognition in its host jurisdiction. The entity must be firewalled from terminal management, commercial operations and capital ownership. Its mandate is non-exclusive and non-directive, with explicit interfaces to existing corridor authorities. The Port Louis Blue Corridor Custodian Office in the Blueprint and draft policy should be assessed against these requirements and existing mandates. Preserving existing authority is compatible with installing a missing system function; it does not justify leaving that function undefined. [B7.6.2, B84.4; P5.5]

The capability stack comprises norms and standards stabilisation, port-corridor-capital interface discipline, independent routes for stress-time clarification, capital governance protocols and corridor harmonisation intelligence. Each requires people, records, procedures, funding and accountable hosting. The legal design

should specify voluntary participation, data limits, conflicts, reporting, independent review and the separation from enforcement and adjudication. A new name alone installs none of these capabilities. [B84.4; B2.12-B2.13]

The Blueprint's institutional, capital and behavioural lock-ins describe three forms of endurance: recognised functions outlasting individuals; financial practice referencing dependable coherence; and operators routinely using interfaces that work. They should not mean coercive dependence, a penalty for withdrawal or irrevocable support to a failed project. Blueprint chapters 84 to 86 must be read together with the earlier non-conversion and exit clauses. This preserves the installation objective while allowing responsible authorities and participants to revise instruments, stop unsuccessful trials and choose other routes. [B2.12-B2.13, B84.3-B84.10, B85-B86]

The first decade and the longer horizon

The Blueprint places system activation across three horizons. Before 2030, strengthen gateway reliability, test short sea arcs, prove productive chains and prepare viable ocean activity. By 2035, demonstrated demand and capability may support greater fleet, terminal, industrial and capital scale. The 2050 proposition is an ocean economy with advanced industries and intergenerational institutional depth. Progress depends on results at each stage. [B5, B27, P16]

The first programme should collect evidence capable of changing a decision. A route needs schedules, directional cargo, customer commitments, vessel costs and competing delivered offers. A productive service needs a buyer, margin, skills and repeat demand. Finance needs enforceable cash flows and explicit loss bearers. Ocean activity needs lawful access, ecology, science and a market. Each investigation should identify what would invalidate its premise. [I]

Match commitment to evidence. A service trial is relatively adjustable; a terminal concession or guarantee creates longer exposure. Every pilot needs a stated purpose, budget, responsible participants, measures of success and a decision date. The outcome must permit expansion, redesign or closure. Evidence gates are useful only when they change the commitment. [I]

An essential service can have a defensible public benefit even when users do not cover its full cost. Its appraisal should compare the discounted economic benefits and real resource costs against alternatives, alongside a separate fiscal affordability test. Transfers between Government and domestic users require consistent treatment; avoided disruption, time and environmental effects must not be counted twice. Uncertain benefits should be tested across scenarios. A commercial service requiring indefinite support needs a distinct public justification rather than a promise that scale will eventually cure its losses.

The city’s resources also carry opportunity costs. Technicians, land, energy, water and public funds have competing uses. Each candidate activity should identify its incremental requirements, training lead times and effects on workers, residents and existing firms. Imported vessels, fuel, equipment and expertise create foreign-currency obligations. Export receipts and financial flows must be assessed on a net basis, with attention to debt service, profit payments abroad and the allocation of currency risk.

Compare activities against scarce land, water, energy, skills and public funds. A smaller technical service may create more durable capability per unit of resource than a larger low-margin operation, but the comparison requires measured costs, employment quality, supplier development and environmental effects. Workers and affected communities must have a practical opportunity to participate in the gains.

The Blueprint's four behavioural pilots test custodial practice separately from an investment's commercial return: a short sea and feeder governance protocol; a blue and corridor capital fiduciary protocol; an interface stress-testing mechanism; and an ESG and compliance arbitration sandbox. Their proposed sequence moves from voluntary adoption to usefulness under stress and then routine practice. The feeder pilot tests coordination

without operating ships or assigning capacity; the fiduciary pilot tests disclosure and separation without selecting investments; the interface pilot tests system signals without collecting competitors' commercial intelligence; the compliance sandbox tests voluntary technical clarification without imposing rulings. Each should end when its useful practice is absorbed into normal operations or its premise fails. Binding arbitration, where chosen, remains governed by a valid agreement and law. [B85]

Two implementation clocks accompany the long-term horizons. Blueprint chapter 84 proposes institutional installation during months 0 to 18, capital and standards integration during months 18 to 36, and routine use during months 36 to 60. The five-year annex in Blueprint chapter 88 adds an execution sequence: consolidate stewardship and intelligence and test existing flows; prepare justified assets and capital structures; scale selectively with skills and research; test resilience under disruption; and retain working practices for adaptation or replication. Progression depends on decision gates, with distinct tests for repeat flows, asset readiness, capital and knowledge, and resilience. The two clocks describe capability formation rather than an automatic construction timetable. [B84, B88]

The Blueprint's irreversibility describes institutional endurance: people retain skills, records remain usable and operators continue to choose dependable interfaces. Read alongside the policy's non-dominance principles, it means capability surviving a change of route, partner or administration. Exit, public review and closure of failed pilots remain necessary to that learning. [B84-B86, B88; P18]

The 3-5-10 Blue SEZ sequence belongs within that discipline. The first three prototypes should be different enough to reveal where the model works, and small enough to stop or adjust if demand or ecology disappoints. Five and ten are later horizons for demonstrated functions, not targets that can justify empty designation. The same caution applies to the Blueprint's suggested 2050 throughput horizons: they express an ambition conditional on carrier networks and real demand, not a forecast that public debt can safely assume. [B10, B16]

The annual account should link operating performance to productive and public results. Calls, throughput and turnaround measure service. Skills, stronger suppliers, retained earnings and reinvestment measure capability. Lawful access, disruption performance and ecological condition measure durability. Each finding should identify a responsible decision and a point for review. [B26; P18]

The Blueprint also proposes a Custodial Resilience Index, or CRI, alongside its Scoreboard 2050. Its five domains are continuity of trade, capital confidence, interpretive coherence, neutrality and trust, and normalisation of useful practice. The suggested weights are approximately 25, 25, 20, 15 and 15 per cent respectively. They are authorial design values, not a calibrated empirical index. The CRI can structure questions about endurance under shocks; it requires definitions, data and validation before numerical use. Productive Yield remains the foundational doctrine's separate test of enduring and reproducible productive capability. A resilience score cannot substitute for that productive outcome. [B23, B26; D]

The Blueprint's ESG and development mapping reinforces this distinction. Environmental results concern climate exposure, resource use and ecological integrity; social results concern skilled work, enterprise and the distribution of opportunity; governance results concern neutrality, credible records, separation of roles and accountability. A Port Louis account should connect those results to identifiable calls, firms, sites and institutions. This gives the resident, supplier and public decision maker a way to examine what the ocean strategy has changed in practice. [B89.2; P12, P16, P18]

This is the doctrine's living corridor in an operational sense. Each sailing produces evidence of demand and missed connections; each financing refusal reveals a problem with risk, records or business fundamentals; each new supplier changes the cargo that might sustain a service. A learning institution collects that evidence and changes the next decision. The point is not perpetual expansion. The system may learn to improve a route, narrow its scope or discontinue it. What endures is the ability to make the next decision with better knowledge. [D, pp. 19-20]

The test of a custodian

Across the four AIC2030 strategic foundations, Port Louis raises a particular question. Mombasa explores the capacity to design a productive corridor, Durban the capacity to retain and govern productive capability, and Abidjan-Lagos the circulation and compounding of value. Port Louis asks what allows an architecture to endure across commercial shocks, political cycles and generations. That is the distinctive burden of the word custodian . Its meaning is continuity with accountability, not command over the ocean or the partners around it. [D, pp. 21-24]

Port Louis will not become a custodian through a title, a terminal or a single bilateral agreement. The identity has to be earned in six linked ways. First, Mauritius must be able to depend on its gateway. Second, regional customers must find a better, repeatable route for particular transactions. Third, producers and enterprises in Mauritius and partner territories must gain capabilities that endure. Fourth, carriers and shippers must have fair access and secure information. Fifth, ocean development must meet legal and ecological limits. Sixth, the public must know where risk lies and who can change course. [B2, B26, P18, I]

The portfolio should now be judged as a set of working relationships. A marine enterprise needs access and protected rights; a shipping chain needs workable economics and reciprocal agreements; finance needs credible obligations and loss allocation. The contribution of Port Louis, the Freeport and Ébène is established when their combination improves those results. [B8-B10, B23; P18; D]

In The Africa I See , custodianship carries a longer moral time horizon: those who govern a port or corridor answer also to people who will inherit it. That thought adds weight to the six tests. A profitable concession that erodes public capacity, an ocean investment that damages a nursery habitat, or a shipping subsidy with no path to durable service cannot be redeemed by a short-lived rise in throughput. The responsibility is practical and intergenerational. It reaches into contract duration, skills transfer, ecological repair and the ability of future institutions to make different choices. [T, pp. 84-85]

These tests can conflict. A line may offer a volume guarantee in exchange for control that weakens neutral access. A processor may create jobs in Mauritius while taking the most valuable activity from a partner. A fuel project may increase port calls while exposing communities to pollution or public storage liabilities. The custodial claim is valuable precisely because it makes these tensions discussable. It does not decide every case in advance. It requires reasons, evidence and recourse.

Port Louis's history gives the city both an opportunity and a burden. It has long organised maritime movement and accumulated public and professional institutions near a working harbour. It also carries histories of extraction and unequal human movement. A contemporary ocean role can neither erase those histories nor borrow legitimacy from them. Its legitimacy will come from the rights it protects, the capabilities it builds and the partners who freely choose to work through it.

For households, the test is dependable supply. For workers and suppliers, it is safe employment, learning and repeat business. For regional producers, it is a better delivered outcome with retained agency. For the city, it is a working waterfront compatible with heritage and public life. Those observable results give custodianship its civic meaning. [B8, B12, B23; P18]

A Port Louis compact for the first decade

The proposed Port Louis Compact translates the argument into a first decision portfolio. Gateway continuity, way-port services, regional shipping and ocean industries have different customers, public purposes and risk bearers. Their evidence should be assembled separately and joined where a transaction warrants it. The compact guides appraisal within competent institutions; its adoption and financing remain their decisions (Table 15). [B27, P18, I]

Table 15. The first decade Port Louis Compact

Compact mandate	First decision or proof	Likely decision holders and participants
Protect the national gateway	Publish a credible continuity and maintenance baseline for essential and export cargo	MPA, operators, relevant ministries and users
Measure the way-port economy	Establish vessel-call bundles, turnaround, local value and normal-routing sensitivity	MPA, agents, suppliers and ship customers
Govern port assets and reconcile investments	Map port assets, rights and access; appraise CHCL and the new terminal separately and together	State, MPA, CHCL, competent reviewers and labour
Test a short sea arc	Obtain customer commitments, route economics and reciprocal partner terms before fleet exposure	Shipowner, shippers, ports, customs and partner institutions
Convert selected flows into firms	Select a few buyer-led Freeport or marine service chains with an enterprise pathway	Firms, Freeport operators, EDB, buyers and financiers
Govern ocean access and test the first Blue SEZ	Define a Port Louis port-anchored perimeter, four value chains, five functional tests, lawful sites and ecological boundaries before designation or concession	Competent national authorities, port actors, prospective firms and affected communities
Make capital transaction- specifici	Name the contract, cash flow, risk bearer and loss limit before financing	Firms, lenders, insurers, regulators and Ébène professionals
Earn diplomatic use	Trial voluntary scheduling, information or disruption protocols with consenting partners	Ports, carriers, regulators, producers and regional bodies
Make legal recourse credible	Map maritime and commercial caseloads and test a judicial specialist list alongside independent arbitration capacity	Judiciary and legislature for court reform; independent arbitral institutions and consenting parties for arbitration
Build professional continuity	Connect procurement, training and research to actual service failures and careers	Employers, unions, education and research institutions
Publish productive yield	Report movement, domestic and partner capability, ecological effects and what was stopped	Responsible public bodies with independent review

Source: Author's proposed Compact and implementation account. [B27; P18; I]

The compact allocates evidence and responsibility to each part of the offering. National supply continuity needs its own public-service case; vessel services need customers and dependable delivery; regional shipping needs directional cargo and workable rotations; Freeport services need a valued productive step; ocean industries need lawful access, ecological evidence and commercial or scientific purpose. Connections among them should be developed where the combined result improves the transaction.

The city's economic progress can be understood through a common operating baseline: vessel-service calls, supplier earnings, producer-to-buyer chains and ocean enterprises. A useful account distinguishes activity from domestic value added and shows how skills, firms and repeat orders develop. Commercial records require confidentiality, while aggregate measures can reveal whether greater movement is strengthening the productive economy.

The resulting evidence should support a provisional opportunity hierarchy and identify which proposals merit preparation, trial, redesign or deferral. Baseline gaps should remain visible until resolved. Productive Yield should track reproducible capability while the economic and fiscal accounts identify costs, income and exposure. This preserves the national gateway obligation and keeps the regional fleet, Blue SEZ, capital and legal proposals tied to the specific problems they can solve.

Begin the Madagascar investigation with one producer, one product and an actual buyer. Their order can expose the binding constraint in sailing, standards, handling, finance or recourse. The result may favour a smaller service, a different route or direct shipment. Apply the same method to the vessel-service bundle and ocean venture, using their own customers and risks. [D, p. 23; B27; I]

Four choices give practical expression to the Port Louis Compact. The landlord port must connect asset planning, open access and reliable national supply, with the CHCL shareholding proposal distinguished from the new terminal. Way-port development depends on service bundles that win repeat vessel calls and support local suppliers. A Mauritian or African short sea service depends on paying cargo, workable round-trip economics and a better delivered offer for regional producers. A port-anchored Blue SEZ adds value where shared scientific, technical or verification capabilities strengthen existing and emerging enterprises. Together, these choices connect the city's identity to productive activity, institutional responsibility and a viable economic base (Table 16). [I; B7.9-B10, B18-B23; O11-O16]

Table 16. Evidence for investment and implementation decisions

Port Louis decision	Publishable proof before commitment	Reason to revise or stop
CHCL and new terminal	Distinct asset rights, valuation and management terms, access safeguards, demand forecast, concession risk and labour implications	No credible protection of the national gateway, fair access or public balance sheet
Way-port service investment	Repeated customer bundles, domestic net value, safe turnaround and a normal-routing demand case	Volume depends on disruption alone or imported fuel dominates value without viable domestic service gain
One short sea trade chain	Paid cargo and empty repositioning both ways, cost per voyage, competing route and reciprocal producer benefit	Shippers will not contract at a delivered advantage or partner rights cannot be agreed
First Port Louis Blue SEZ candidate	Named users and activity, lawful perimeter, five functions, ecology, operator, finance and exit	It merely renames existing firms, transfers port powers improperly or lacks a paying use
Specialist legal capacity	Judiciary-led caseload and demand study, enforceable contract pathways and affordable access	Existing courts and arbitration can meet the need through smaller procedural improvements

Source: Author’s decision criteria, developed in the preceding discussion. [I; B7.9-B10, B18-B23; O11-O16]

The Compact turns investigations into decisions. Shipowners need freight commitments and voyage economics; ocean enterprises need rights, science and customers; public authorities need costs and exposure; judicial reform needs legal demand and institutional evidence. Responsible bodies should publish reasons for proceeding, narrowing, redesigning or stopping, linked to continuity, capability, access and stewardship. [B26-B27, B88; P18]

The established port-planning disciplines remain necessary. Demand forecasts, vessel mix, cargo estimates, berth and yard capacity, marine conditions, traffic modelling, capital and operating costs, environmental assessment, procurement and concession appraisal should be performed with recognised methods. The proposed AIC2030 model supplies the wider economic question these analyses serve: whether the chosen port and ocean assets produce a durable gateway economy. It does not replace engineering, finance, law or the commercial judgment of shipowners and customers. A concession should specify rights, access, performance, labour, maintenance, information, public risk and remedies appropriate to its asset and mandate. [B17, I]

The first annual account should reconcile operating movement, domestic value added, resident and partner income, fiscal exposure, enduring capability and welfare effects. Movement records calls by purpose, cargo, connection reliability, turnaround and service quality. Production and income accounts trace enterprises and suppliers without double counting, including imported inputs and payments abroad. The fiscal account records expenditure, receipts and contingent liabilities separately. Productive Yield asks what enduring and reproducible capability remains: firms graduating into more complex work, repeat export chains, retained skills and reinvestment. Welfare and boundary conditions include national continuity, distribution, fair access, ecological results, trusted information and practical recourse. A rising movement total cannot compensate for eroded capability or a failed legal or ecological boundary. Each finding should support a responsible decision, including a decision to stop. [B26; D; A1]

Port Louis would earn the title Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor by becoming useful across all five circuits without claiming command over them. A Mauritian importer would trust its essential gateway. A passing ship would find a safe and efficient service call. A regional producer would choose a route because it improves the delivered result while preserving productive agency. An ocean venture would operate under rights that protect the sea and those who depend on it. Firms and workers would be able to carry capability from one transaction into the next. The compact gives those propositions a way to be examined in public and revised when evidence changes.

Epilogue An ocean city by choice

At the harbour, arrivals and departures will continue to organise the day. Cargo will move, technicians will repair, suppliers will deliver and voyages will be planned. Some opportunities will merit investment. Others will prove commercially weak or ecologically unacceptable. A strategy earns credibility by making both judgments well.

Port Louis's identity as the Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor grows from its port, commercial and administrative foundations. Maritime connectivity keeps Mauritius supplied and trading. Vessel services, Freeport logistics value added services and regional distribution connect movement to enterprise capability. Ocean development creates further industries and knowledge; governance protects rights and ecological continuity; diplomacy sustains cooperation among sovereign partners. The capital and professional services developed in chapter 9 support these relationships. The custodial identity becomes credible when Mauritius and its partners retain stronger enterprises, deeper skills, trustworthy institutions and productive capability that endures. [B3.11, B5.7, B8, B23; D]

The ocean will remain shared, contested and changing. Port Louis can matter by understanding the connections it serves, the capabilities they leave and the choices they preserve for others. Its standing will grow with work that partners trust and institutions can sustain. That is the practical promise of custodianship.

The longest test is the inheritance: a gateway that can be maintained, firms and skills that can adapt, institutions that can be trusted and marine systems capable of renewal. Port Louis earns its custodial identity when the next generation has greater capacity to choose, produce and cooperate. [D, pp. 33-34; T, pp. 84-85]

Appendix A The proposed economic system at a glance

This appendix brings the supporting architecture together for reference. Five productive circuits organise activity and customers: the national gateway; the way port; the regional maritime network; port-city transformation, including Freeport logistics value added services; and governed ocean development. The seven Strategic Gates locate the decisions affecting those activities. The six operating layers below identify the capabilities needed to sustain them. Continuity, conversion, recourse and renewal test how the relationships perform; Productive Yield asks what enduring capability remains. Chapters 1 to 8 develop these relationships through Port Louis's geography, institutions and enterprises.

Port activity and ocean development are the economic domains of the proposed city system. Ocean governance and diplomacy shape their lawful, ecological and reciprocal conditions. These four functions operate through the six layers of the AIC2030 Economic Operating System. Governance and diplomacy are most visible in the governance and trade layers, while influencing the physical, industrial, digital and capital interfaces. The layers remain the foundational systems architecture; the city functions explain its application to Port Louis. Productive Yield asks what enduring and reproducible capability remains because the activity occurred. [D; B9-B10, B23]

The wider geography is supplied by the Blueprint's three custodial layers: the Custodian Interface in Port Louis, the Capital and Confidence Engine in Ébène, and the Corridor Field across African gateways and productive territories. Its Custodian, Corridor Services and Corridor Programs stacks organise functions across those locations. This geographic architecture explains where responsibilities and productive activity sit; the city circuits and operating layers explain how the resulting economic relationships work (Table 17). [B3.10-B3.11; D]

Table 17. The six economic operating layers

Capabilities supporting the Port Louis economic system

Layer	Proposed Port Louis system function	Evidence that the function works
Physical	The national gateway, berth and yard operations, selected feeder links and lawful ocean infrastructure	Reliable calls, functioning connections, safe assets and continuity during shocks
Industrial	Freeport services, nearshoring, ocean food, selected Blue SEZ activity and partner production	Repeat orders, improved quality, viable firms, jobs and capability retained in more than one place
Trade	Market access, customs and standards interoperability, contract performance and route choice	Delivered cost and time against alternatives, repeat customers and transparent partner gain

Table 17. The six economic operating layers

Capabilities supporting the Port Louis economic system

Layer	Proposed Port Louis system function	Evidence that the function works
Digital	Appropriate cargo visibility, marine intelligence, reporting and data integrity	Reliable records, secure access, useful decisions and no inappropriate sharing of rival or producer data
Capital	Trade finance, insurance, payments, pre-trade capital where justified and long-term investment after proof	Named risk bearers, financed transactions, loss discipline and reinvestment without implied State guarantees
Governance	Statutory mandates, neutral access, ocean diplomacy, partner rights and ecological rules	Clear authority, independent recourse, consent, accountability and the ability to change course

Source: Foundational doctrine and Blueprint systems architecture. [D; B9-B10, B23]

This architecture is circular in its effects. Shipping can enable firms, firms can create more regular cargo, repeat cargo can attract capital, and trustworthy records can reduce friction. The cycle can also run backward. An unreliable berth interrupts supply; weak standards make a product unfinanceable; missing partner benefit dissolves consent. A monograph of an economic system must make both the virtuous and the failing cycle visible (Table 18). [B8, D]

The Blueprint's ten engines have different first tests. They should not be treated as a simultaneous capital programme.

Table 18. The Blueprint’s ten growth engines

Engine in the Blueprint	First practical question
Transshipment and short sea	Which customers will repeat the route at a delivered advantage?
Logistics value-added services	Which paid service creates measurable product or market improvement?
Nearshoring and micro-manufacturing	Which buyer, product and workforce justify production?
Madagascar-Mauritius co-development	What value and decision rights remain with the Malagasy partner?
Ocean food and aquaculture	Are resource use, ecology, safety and market access compatible?
Marine biotechnology and materials	Who governs research, access and benefit sharing?
Green maritime energy and bunkering	What domestic value and supply resilience remain after fuel inputs are paid for?
Blue carbon and nature-based assets	Are ecological integrity, rights and measurement credible?

Table 18. The Blueprint’s ten growth engines

Engine in the Blueprint	First practical question
Ocean data and intelligence	Who controls the data, who may use it and what decision improves?
Maritime services, arbitration and governance	Will parties voluntarily trust the service and its independence?

Source: Blueprint growth engines, with the author’s practical questions. [B]

Appendix B How the source architecture enters the monograph

The source reconciliation below covers the Blueprint's 89 numbered chapters and the proposed national policy paper's 18 sections at the level of substantive domains and instruments. Related source chapters are grouped to show where their content enters the monograph. The manuscript develops those domains through a city economic argument, retaining the distinction between strategy, proposed policy, public-record functions and illustrative transactions. Numerical aspirations, legal proposals and implementation clocks retain their source status; they do not become adopted policy through inclusion here.

Chapter 1 introduces seven strategic gates as an authorial diagnostic of Port Louis's flows, decision rights and productive outcomes; the distinct Ébène companion node is developed in chapter 9. The manuscript carries the Blueprint's port and ocean development domains together with governance and diplomacy. Chapters 2 to 4 consider the gateway, way port and regional maritime network. Chapters 5 and 6 explain productive conversion and three transactions; chapters 7 and 8 develop ocean industries, legal stewardship and diplomacy. Chapters 9 and 10 address capital, institutions, people and endurance. The appendices preserve the detailed source-to-section mapping (Table 19). [B; D]

Table 19. Relationship to the Strategic Blueprint

Source domains, chapter references and locations in this volume

Blueprint domain	Principal source chapters	Monograph location
AIC2030 doctrine, custodianship, Africa-first agency	1-6, 29-32, 35, 75	Sources and method; Prologue; 1, 3, 10; Epilogue
City, national gateway and operating system	7-8, 16-17	1-2, 3, 5; Appendix A
Ocean space, infrastructure and industries	9, 11-13	6, 7, 8
Blue SEZ architecture and sequence	10, 51	7, 10
Global law and the ten engines	14-15	7, 8; Appendix A
Short sea service, Freeport, Madagascar and MSCL	18-21, 50	3-4, 5, 6

Table 19. Relationship to the Strategic Blueprint

Source domains, chapter references and locations in this volume

Blueprint domain	Principal source chapters	Monograph location
Blue capital, asset classes and investment platform	22, 24-25, 36-45, 47-48, 79-80	5, 9, 10; Appendix A
Diplomacy, governance and institutions	23, 28, 32, 46, 49, 77, 85	8, 10
Scoreboard, execution and pilots	26-27, 33, 76, 78, 83-87	8, 10
Data, research and intelligence	13, 34, 52, 64, 70, 81	5, 8, 10; Appendix A
Political economy, resilience and stress	28, 53-55, 62, 72	2-3, 5-6, 8-10
Human capital, mobility and institutional learning	2, 31, 56-63, 82	1, 5, 10
Trade facilitation, regulatory interoperability and dispute handling	65-74	6, 8, 10
Five-year execution annex and asset tiers	88	7, 9, 10; repeat-flow, readiness, skills and resilience gates
Doctrine note and ESG development mapping	89	Sources and method; 7, 10; Appendix A
Whole-of-water and source-to- sea architecture	2.2, 3.2	8; connections to 3, 7 and 10
Custodial layers, execution stacks and city-model relationship	3.5, 3.10-3.11	5; Appendix A
Passerelle, reference gateways, trading hubs and firm progression	30	6; enterprise connections to 5-6
Non-conversion, Capital Charter and fiscal firewalli	2.12-2.15, 32	9, 8, 10i
Four financing tiers and their sequencing	39.3-39.6	9; distinct from the five asset classes
Standing stewardship and custodial installation	77, 83-86	10; institutional, capital and behavioural tests

Source: Author’s source reconciliation of the Strategic Blueprint. [B; D]

The January 2026 draft national policy proposes instruments for that system. Its gateway, fleet and Freeport measures are considered in chapters 2 to 7; ocean governance and legal recourse in chapter 8; the Port Louis and Ébène relationship in chapter 9; and implementation and safeguards in chapter 10. The policy preceded the Government's subsequent port orientation, which is identified separately. [P; G1]

The policy register traces each instrument into the monograph. For gateway and operator measures, it should be read alongside the consolidated port account in chapter 2, which distinguishes the later Government

developments from the early source assumptions. The remaining rows preserve the source's strategic purposes and locate their economic and institutional treatment.

Chapter 2 records the terminal chronology and dated CHCL transaction status. That distinction carries through the source reconciliation: operator shareholding, investment in a new terminal and the existing operating facility have separate economic and legal implications. The network-anchor and landlord-port logic is retained, with fair access, productive linkages and public exposure considered for each decision. [P5-P6; G1; R1-R2; O5]

Three reconciliation boundaries remain explicit. First, marine and tropical medicine is a proposed research and industrial direction within the policy's Blue SEZ typology; the monograph carries the marine biotechnology and health interface without claiming that a medical industry already exists. Second, the Blueprint's future numerical targets, CRI weights and implementation dates are strategic propositions requiring evidence, rather than established forecasts or statutory deadlines. Third, references to authority, command, lock-in and assetisation are read with the sources' own limits on sovereignty, non-dominance, private operation and voluntary use. The applied city model and worked transactions explain those propositions; they do not confer additional powers (Table 20). [B9-B10, B23-B26, B84-B89; P4, P9, P18]

Table 20. Policy instruments and their treatment in the monograph

The eighteen source sections and their substantive treatment

Policy section	Monograph location	Substantive treatment
1 Executive summary	2, 4, 6-9, 10	Integrated continuity, shipping, transformation, capital and safeguards
2 Preamble and context	Prologue; 2, 3, 8, 10i	Small-state exposure and Africa- first regional purpose
3 Purpose objectives and scope	Sources and method; 5, 10	Four city functions and the connected national system
4 Governing principles	2, 5, 8-9, 10	Capability, role separation, neutrality, capital discipline and stewardship
5 Institutional architecture	2, 4, 10	Existing mandates distinguished from proposed coordinating functions
6 Port Louis framework	2, 3, 5-6	Landlord port, network anchoring and productive interfaces
7 Shipping and short sea	3-4, 6, 10	Mauritian or African fleet participation and catalytic MSCL proposal
8 Freeport 2.0	6-7	Value completion, producer benefit, standards and finance
9 Blue SEZ poles	7, 10	Eight content families, functional design and 3-5-10 sequence
10 Dual pillar architecture	5, 6, 8-9	Port Louis maritime and diplomatic role; Ébène capital and professional role

Table 20. Policy instruments and their treatment in the monograph

The eighteen source sections and their substantive treatment

Policy section	Monograph location	Substantive treatment
11 Ébène IFC	9, 10	Private capital, trade finance, payments, asset management and integrity
12 Data MRV ESG	7, 8, 10	Protected data, useful intelligence and measurable performance
13 Ocean diplomacy	8, 10	Voluntary cooperation through competent national and partner institutions
14 Legal foundations	2, 7, 8	International frameworks, concessions and independent recourse
15 Security and resilience	2, 3, 8, 10	Continuity planning, lawful security and shared disruption protocols
16 Expected outcomes	10	Skills, firms, reliable services, capital and ecological results
17 Conclusion	10; Epilogue	Enduring custodial purpose and national resilience
18 Safeguards and endurance	6, 10	National-interest safeguards, co-ownership, non-substitution and memory

Source: Author's reconciliation of the January 2026 draft policy paper. [P]

The Africa I See contributes the author's key-and-star prologue, the move from extraction to productive circulation, port-city belonging, the International Financial Centre trust question and the Mascareignes as a lived maritime geography. These threads appear across the opening, the productive and ocean chapters and the conclusion. [T]

A New Architecture for African Economic Sovereignty supplies the foundational doctrine: productive transformation, value leakage at interfaces, partner co-authorship, governance between fragmentation and capture, and capability that can compound. The Port Louis model is an application within this wider doctrine. [D]

Appendix C Evidence and decision register

The register distinguishes documented activity, Government proposals, reported negotiations, Blueprint propositions and illustrative tests. Each category answers a different question and requires a different decision record. The dated account of CHCL negotiations appears in chapter 2; the register summarises the implications for the economic argument (Table 21).

Table 21. Evidence and decision register

Current standing and the evidence needed for decisions

Question	Current standing in this manuscript	Evidence needed for a decision
Is Port Louis a national maritime gateway?	Established national function	Current MPA and trade records for operational assessment
Can a particular regional short sea arc pay for itself?	Blueprint proposition	Published schedules, customer contracts, paid loads both ways, vessel costs and alternative delivered routes
Should a new terminal be built and at what scale?	Government proposal for a distinct 50-hectare terminal; current MCT is a separate 35-hectare asset	Current master plan, demand and berth forecasts, environmental review, financing and concession terms
What does carrier participation in CHCL secure?	Government recommendation (March); advanced negotiations reported (September); no signed terms established in public sources reviewed 15 October	Signed agreements, valuation, governance, management rights, access rules, labour terms and competition review
Can way-port calls build a domestic service economy?	Existing port function with unmeasured net yield	Service bundles, turnaround, domestic margins, skills, environmental costs and normal- routing demand
Can Freeport activity yield durable capability?	Productive hypothesis	Firm-level demand, margin, jobs, skills, partner share and repeated orders
Can an ocean use be granted lawful access?	Blueprint planning and concession proposal	Competent authority, site rights, competing uses, ecological baseline, affected communities, performance and exit terms
Which Blue SEZ poles are justified?	Sequenced authorial proposal, with Port Louis the first port- anchored hypothesis	Four value chains, five functional tests, defined operational perimeter, lawful rights, ecology, anchor firms, infrastructure and exit costs
Can Ébène mobilise capital for the corridors?	Functional propositioni	Eligible transactions, risk bearers, financing terms, regulatory approvals and repayment evidence
Should Mauritius create a specialist maritime court or list?	Authorial proposal; no new court established by this monograph	Existing judicial jurisdiction and caseload, constitutional and statutory review, independence, cost, access to justice and comparative options
Can Port Louis attract international commercial disputes?	Existing arbitration and court institutions; wider jurisdiction is a proposition	Party demand, valid jurisdiction or arbitration clauses, enforceability, professional capacity and impartiality

Table 21. Evidence and decision register

Current standing and the evidence needed for decisions

Question	Current standing in this manuscript	Evidence needed for a decision
Does custodianship benefit partners?	Governing condition	Partner consent, rights, independent recourse and jointly measured productive gains
Do voluntary custodial protocols work?	Four proposed behavioural pilots	Partner uptake, usefulness under disruption, fair access, independence and continuation without sponsorship

Source: Author's synthesis of the Blueprint, policy paper and dated public evidence cited in the main text. [B; P; I; G1; R1-R2]

Update this register when official decisions, executed agreements or measured results change the evidence. A useful architecture must permit a route, terminal design or institution to be revised without disguising failure or abandoning its public purpose. The record should preserve the reasons for each decision and the evidence that altered it.

Sources and reading guide

[B] Rhavy Nursimulu, Port Louis, Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor: Architecting Ocean, Trade and Capital Governance for the Next Ocean Civilisation, Strategic Blueprint, January 2026, 376 pages. Numbered chapters in this monograph's references follow the Blueprint's chapter numbering. The Blueprint proposes a strategic future; numerical horizons and institutions within it should be read as authorial proposals.

[P] Rhavy Nursimulu, Port Louis, the Custodian of the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor, draft national policy paper, January 2026. References P5, P6 and so forth denote its sections. This text was prepared as a Government-facing proposal, not adopted national policy. It contains an earlier 35-hectare terminal concept and an earlier CHCL posture, both of which predate the Government's later orientation. Its reference to "MCHC" is a naming error; the company is Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd, CHCL.

[I] Rhavy Nursimulu, Port Louis and the Indian Ocean Blue Corridor, AIC2030 Institute circulation paper, September 2026. Economic and public-interest analysis of the Blueprint, including the Government's later CHCL and new terminal proposals, competitor comparison and commercial illustrations. Its source notes identify the underlying Government, MPA and reporting records.

[D] Rhavy Nursimulu, A New Architecture for African Economic Sovereignty: From Extraction to Circulation. From Infrastructure to Systems. From Participation to Authorship, 2026. Foundational doctrine of AIC2030. The present monograph is a city-specific application, not a replacement for that text.

[T] Rhavy Nursimulu, The Africa I See: A Civilisational Manifesto for Africa's Economic Sovereignty, A5 reader edition, 2026. A first-person and civilisational source for the author's journey and the emergence of the Port Louis idea. Its imagery and personal interpretation are distinct from the Blueprint's proposed architecture and from independently verified historical or market facts.

[M] Rhavy Nursimulu, Mombasa: The Frontier, AIC2030 City Monograph Series, 2026, edition supplied by the author. Comparative source for a city gateway economic model, not a template transferred wholesale to Port Louis.

[L] Rhavy Nursimulu, The Empire Merchant, AIC2030 Strategic Monograph, publication edition supplied by the author, 2026. Comparative source for flows, enterprise and commercial-system architecture.

[H1] Mauritius Ports Authority, "History of the Port," https://www.mauport.com/history-of-the-port-2/ .

[H2] National Archives Department, Mauritius, "Brief History of Mauritius," https://nationalarchives.govmu.org/nationalarchives/?page_id=1390 ; Republic of Mauritius, "Explore Mauritius," https://www.govmu.org/EN/Pages/exploremauritius.aspx .

[H3] UNESCO World Heritage Centre, "Aapravasi Ghat," https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1227/ .

[H4] UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Republic of Mauritius launches a Local Economic Development Plan for Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage property, 22 February 2017, https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1631 . Consulted 3 October 2026.

[H5] Enrico Bertacchini and Alessio Re, Port Louis 2030 Investing in the city's cultural assets, 2017. Publisher summary, Fondazione Santagata, https://www.fondazionesantagata.it/en/publications/port-louis-2030-investing-the-citys-cultural-assets-the-local-economic-development-plan-for-port-louismauritius/ . The summary, rather than the full report, supports the urban geography and stated planning purpose used here. Consulted 3 October 2026.

[O1] Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, "Blue Economy," https://blueeconomy.govmu.org/Pages/Blue-Economy.aspx .

[O2] Republic of Mauritius, NDC Adaptation, "Fisheries and Blue Economy," https://ode.govmu.org/ndc-adaptation-fisheries-and-blue-economy .

[O3] Republic of Mauritius, Third Nationally Determined Contribution, 2025, https://environment.govmu.org/DocumentsList/NDC%203.0%20%20Mauritius.pdf . The executive summary and national-circumstances section use approximately 2.3 million square kilometres for the EEZ. Chapter 8 follows the fisheries ministry's approximately 2.2 million figure and separately identifies the jointly managed shelf [O22]. Older Government planning material describes a different 2.3 million maritime-zone aggregate: 1.9 million EEZ plus approximately 0.40 million seabed and subsoil under joint management [O23]. Those uses of 2.3 million are not interchangeable. The 1.3 million figure in The Africa I See is not used as the geographic baseline here. Exact differences between the official EEZ estimates are not attributed to a particular territorial or boundary change without supporting geographic evidence.

[O4] Mauritius Ports Authority, "Port Services," https://www.mauport.com/port-services/ . MPA identifies Port Louis as a way port and lists passing-vessel and ancillary services. Accessed October 2026.

[O5] Mauritius Ports Authority, "Terminals," https://www.mauport.com/terminals/ . Describes the current berth and terminal functions, including the existing MCT area of 35 hectares. Accessed October 2026.

[O6] Mauritius Ports Authority, Annual Report 2024-2025, https://www.mauport.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/MPA_Annual-Report_2024-2025_PRO4700-compressed.pdf . Printed p. 4 supplies cargo, container and vessel totals; table 10 on printed p. 77 supplies bunker volumes and calls; table 22 on printed p. 85 supplies outer-harbour call categories. Financial-year series and the report's definitions are retained.

[O7] Republic of Mauritius, "Justice," https://www.govmu.org/EN/infoservices/justiceanddefence/Pages/justice.aspx ; Constitution of Mauritius, https://attorneygeneral.govmu.org/Documents/Laws%20of%20Mauritius/A-Z%20Acts/C/Co/Constitution%2C%20GN%2054%20of%201968.pdf . The Supreme Court includes a Commercial Division; proposals concerning court jurisdiction and structure require independent judicial and legal scrutiny.

[O8] Mauritius International Arbitration Centre, "Acts & Rules" and "Dispute Resolution Services," https://miac.mu/acts-rules/ and https://miac.mu/dispute-resolution-services/ . These describe the existing arbitration framework and services.

[O9] Mauritius International Arbitration Centre, website and contact details, https://miac.mu/ . MIAC is located at the Port Louis Waterfront.

[O10] International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, "The Tribunal" and "Jurisdiction," https://www.itlos.org/en/main/the-tribunal/the-tribunal/ and https://www.itlos.org/en/main/jurisdiction/ . Its jurisdiction depends on UNCLOS and other applicable agreements.

[O11] Mauritius Ports Authority, "Bunkering Services at Port Louis Harbour," https://www.mauport.com/bunkering-services-at-port-louis-harbour/ . Supplier and barge counts are MPA website descriptions as accessed October 2026, not measures of domestic net value.

[O12] Mauritius Ports Authority, "Other Facilities," https://www.mauport.com/other-facilities-2/ . Describes dry docks, wheat silos and cement handling and storage; capacities are facility descriptions, not measured utilisation.

[O13] Mauritius Ports Authority, "Seafood Hub at Port Louis Harbour," https://www.mauport.com/seafood-hub-at-port-louis-harbour/ . The stated approximately 112,000 tonnes is a rounded website estimate without a specified reporting year in the text consulted. Do not compare it directly with FY2024/25 series.

[O14] Mauritius Ports Authority, "Port Master Plan Executive Summary," https://www.mauport.com/port-master-plan-executive-summary/ . Displays the older 2015-2040 planning summary. The FY2024/25 annual report describes a board-approved Port Master Plan 2024 through 2050; obtain the current plan before using either summary for land allocation. [O6]

[O15] Mauritius Ports Authority, “Port Operators,” https://www.mauport.com/port-operators/ . The listing establishes licensed categories, names and addresses as displayed in October 2026; it does not establish current contract participation or commercial performance.

[O16] Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry, “Arbitration and Mediation Center,” https://www.mcci.org/en/our-services/mcci-arbitration-and-mediation-center/ . Another existing institutional provider of arbitration and mediation; no comparative caseload assessment is asserted here.

[O17] Mauritius Ports Authority, “About Us,” https://www.mauport.com/about-us/ . Describes MPA as a landlord port authority providing infrastructure, superstructure, marine services and navigation aids, and regulating activity in designated port areas. This public description does not establish the terms of any individual concession. Accessed October 2026.

[O18] Princes Tuna Mauritius, Our History, https://princes-tuna-mauritius.com/index.php/our-history . Operator account of the 1972 origins and 2015 merger, consulted 3 October 2026.

[O19] Princes Tuna Mauritius, Marine Road production site, https://www.princes-tuna-mauritius.com/production-site/marine-road . Product and facility description, consulted 3 October 2026. Operator descriptions establish activities and products, not independently audited local value or commercial commitments.

[O20] Grand Port Maritime de La Réunion, “A strategic position,” https://reunion.port.fr/en/a-strategic-position/ ; and “2025, une année record à Port Réunion grâce à une performance collective,” https://reunion.port.fr/fr/2025-une-annee-record-a-port-reunion-grace-a-une-performance-collective/ . The authority describes its distribution role and reports 370,433 TEU for calendar 2025. This is not a like-for-like comparison with Port Louis's financial-year series. Consulted 15 October 2026.

[O21] Japan International Cooperation Agency, Madagascar office, Chief Representative's Message, https://www.jica.go.jp/english/overseas/madagascar/office/about/message.html ; Embassy of Japan in Madagascar, “Inauguration partielle du Projet d'Extension du Port de Toamasina,” 21 March 2026, https://www.mg.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_ja/11_000001_00993.html . The embassy records the partial handover of 333 metres of quay C4 at a reported depth of 16 metres; this does not establish completion of the whole expansion. Consulted 15 October 2026.

[O22] Ministry responsible for the Blue Economy and Fisheries, Republic of Mauritius, “Marine Resources,” https://blueconomy.govmu.org/Pages/Marine-Resources.aspx . States an EEZ of 2.2 million square kilometres including Chagos and a separately identified 396,000 square kilometre continental shelf co-managed with Seychelles. Consulted 15 October 2026.

[O23] Ministry of Finance, Republic of Mauritius, Budget 2015-2016 Supplement, “Emerging Sectors: Ocean Economy,” printed p. 24, https://mof.govmu.org/Documents/Documents/Budget%202015-2016/Supplement.pdf . Describes a 2.3 million square kilometre maritime zone as 1.9 million EEZ plus approximately 0.40 million seabed and subsoil under joint management with Seychelles. This is historical planning usage, not a current delimitation finding.

[O24] Sri Lanka Ports Authority, “Colombo Port,” https://www.slpa.lk/port-colombo/colombo . Establishes the port's interregional container-network role. Historical capacity and traffic figures on the page are not treated as current performance. Consulted 15 October 2026.

[O25] Port of Salalah, “Port of Salalah introduces viable alternative to Red Sea route,” https://salalahport.com.om/press-release-details/port-of-salalah-introduces-viable-alternative-to-red-sea-route ; and “Salalah Port records strong growth in container and cargo volumes in 2025,” https://salalahport.com.om/press-release-details/salalah-port-records-strong-growth-in-container-and-cargo-volumes-in-2025 . Supports network positioning and sensitivity to route changes; operator claims of cost and time savings are not adopted as Port Louis comparison results. Consulted 15 October 2026.

[O26] Government Information Service, “PM reaffirms Chagos sovereignty in London”, 14 October 2026. https://gis.govmu.org/gis/?id=2610&page_id=4008 . Reports the 2 October meeting and treaty non-ratification; consulted 16 October 2026. Cited to distinguish the published Chagos-inclusive maritime-area description from treaty implementation and current administrative arrangements.

[G1] Prime Minister’s Office, “Port Master Plan 2024: Major developments underway to enhance Port Louis Harbour,” 31 March 2026, https://primeminister.govmu.org/pm/?p=4270 . Records the committee recommendation on up to 40 per cent CHCL participation, subject to procurement and competition law, and separately describes the proposed 50-hectare Island Container Terminal, 1.2 kilometre quay and estimated Rs 47.3 billion cost.

[R1] Vashish Nuckchhed, “Le géant Maersk s’apprête à gérer la Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd,” L’Express, 23 September 2026, https://lexpress.mu/node/562873 . Reports advanced negotiations, an envisaged 40/60 capital split, a possible management role and a Transaction Advisor yet to be appointed; this is reporting, not an executed transaction.

[R2] Vashish Nuckchhed, “Les syndicats exigent des garanties avant l’entrée de Maersk et MSC au capital,” L’Express, 24 September 2026, https://lexpress.mu/s/les-syndicats-exigent-des-garanties-avant-lentree-de-maersk-et-msc-au-capital-562912 . Reports union concerns about traffic, employment and conditions of service and the anticipated valuation process. The reported profit figure is a union assertion and is not adopted as an audited result here.

[A1] United Nations and partner organisations, System of National Accounts 2008, chapters 6 and 7, including paragraphs 6.77 and 7.21; https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/docs/sna2008.pdf . Accounting reference for output, intermediate consumption, value added and primary income. The numerical examples in chapters 6 and 7 use assumed inputs; they do not estimate new national accounts. Operational accounts should follow Statistics Mauritius definitions and consistent institutional and geographic boundaries.

Independent analytical and comparative references

The following sources were consulted on 16 October 2026. Source scope is identified where an overview, abstract or operator account supplies the evidence. Comparative examples identify mechanisms and measurement choices; they do not establish a transferable commercial return.

[E1] World Bank. 2025. Port Reform Toolkit, third edition, especially Modules 3 (Port Governance), 4 (Private Sector Participation), 5 (Economic Regulation), 6 (Risk Management and Financing) and 7 (Social and Labour Aspects). Official publication and module summaries. https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/transport/publication/port-reform-toolkit .

[E2] UNCTAD. 2025. Review of Maritime Transport 2025: Staying the Course in Turbulent Waters. Publication overview and official launch materials. https://unctad.org/topic/transport-and-trade-logistics/review-of-maritime-transport ; https://unctad.org/press-material/stormy-seas-global-shipping-unctad-warns-uncertainty-volatility-and-rising-costs .

[E3] OECD. 2025. The Ocean Economy to 2050. OECD Publishing, Paris. Reader’s guide and measurement definitions. https://doi.org/10.1787/a9096fb1-en .

[E4] World Bank. 2026. Riding the Next Wave: Rewiring Institutions, Infrastructure, and Incentives for Growth and Jobs. Official summary of the Mauritius Country Growth and Jobs Report, 6 October. https://www.worldbank.org/en/brief/2026/10/06/riding-the-next-wave-rewiring-institutions-infrastructure-and-incentives-for-growt .

[E5] World Bank. 2026. Mauritius Country Climate and Development Report. Official country-report overview and launch materials. https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mauritius/publication/mauritius-country-climate-and-development-report-ccdr .

[E6] World Bank, PROBLUE. Marine Spatial Planning for a Resilient and Inclusive Blue Economy Toolkit. Official toolkit overview, guidance volumes and economic-analysis framework. https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/problue/publication/marine-spatial-planning-for-a-resilient-and-inclusive-blue-economy-toolkit .

[E7] World Bank and International Association of Ports and Harbors. Port Community Systems: Lessons from Global Experience. Official report overview, thematic chapters and case-study register. https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/publication/port-community-systems-driving-trade-in-the-21st-century .

[E8] Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore. 2026. Singapore Posts Record Port Performance in 2025 and Develops Future Readiness through Industry Collaborations for 2026. Official release; 2025 operating and maritime-cluster descriptions. https://www.mpa.gov.sg/media-centre/details/singapore-posts-record-port-performance-in-2025-and-develops-future-readiness-through-industry-collaborations-for-2026 .

[E9] Portbase. Annual Report 2025. Operator-reported participation, availability and governance descriptions. These are not adopted as independently audited welfare measures. https://www.portbase.com/en/annual-reports/annual-report-2025/ .

[E10] Notteboom, T. E., and J.-P. Rodrigue. 2005. Port Regionalization: Towards a New Phase in Port Development. Maritime Policy & Management 32(3): 297-313. https://doi.org/10.1080/03088830500139885 . The abstract and publication record support the limited conceptual comparison made here.

[E11] Hidalgo, C. A., and R. Hausmann. 2009. The Building Blocks of Economic Complexity. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 106(26): 10570-10575. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0900943106 ; open article: https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2705545/ .

Glossary

Blue Corridor. The proposed regional maritime and productive relationships connecting Port Louis with consenting Indian Ocean and African partners.

Blue Special Economic Zone. A proposed development instrument linking governed ocean uses, productive chains and port-based capabilities. Its designation alone does not establish demand or value.

Continuity. The capacity to sustain essential flows and services through routine operations and disruption.

Conversion. The translation of movement and transactions into productive activity, enterprise capability and retained value.

Custodianship. A responsibility for useful continuity, trusted interfaces and stewardship. In this monograph it conveys no supranational jurisdiction.

Freeport logistics value added services. The storage, handling, consolidation, processing and related enterprise services that form part of Port Louis's productive offering.

National gateway. The port function that supports Mauritius's essential supplies and exports, irrespective of the commercial success of regional hub ambitions.

Non-conversion rule. The boundary preventing custodial coordination and information from becoming sovereign, regulatory, judicial, military or commercial command.

Passerelle. The progression of African firms into external markets through useful logistics, transformation and market interfaces that retain origin value and learning.

Port Louis and Ébène. Distinct cities with complementary functions. Port Louis anchors maritime activity, public administration and commerce; Ébène supplies capital, professional and technology interfaces.

Productive circuits. Five overlapping economic relationships: national supply and exports, passing-vessel services, regional maritime connections, port-city transformation and governed ocean development.

Productive Yield. The enduring and reproducible productive capability remaining because movement, a transaction or an ocean use occurred.

Recourse. Access to a competent and independent means of resolving disputes and protecting rights.

Renewal. The reinvestment, learning and adaptation through which capabilities and ecological foundations can endure.

Strategic Gate. A concentration of decisions over a critical flow whose governance shapes productive capacity and strategic direction.

Way port. Services supplied to vessels using the surrounding sea routes, including refuelling, provisioning, repair and other maritime work.

About the author

Rhavy Nursimulu, FCILT, is a Mauritian Logistics and Trade Architect, Founder, CEO and Chief Architect of LOGI-CONSULT, and Chair of Africa Intelligent Corridors 2030. His work connects ports, corridors, productive enterprise and the institutions that enable Africa to trade, industrialise and retain value.

This monograph belongs to the AIC2030 City Monograph Series. It develops the Port Louis Strategic Blueprint into a city economic argument linking the working harbour, ocean development, accountable governance and reciprocal diplomacy.

Subject index

Selected subjects and substantive discussions. References follow this edition’s printed pagination.

Aapravasi Ghat. 7-9
Arbitration and maritime law. 52-54, 60-63
Blue Corridor. 20, 46-48, 66-68
Blue Special Economic Zones. 41-45, 56, 57
Bunkering. 18-20, 30, 31, 39
Chagos and treaty status. 47, 48
CHCL and carrier equity. 13-15, 42, 43, 60, 61, 65, 66
Climate and ecological risk. 39-41, 48-52, 62-64
Custodial Capital Charter. 56, 57
Custodial Ocean Economy. 5, 6, 23-25, 27, 28
Custodial Resilience Index. 63, 64
Custodianship. 4-7, 27, 28, 46, 47, 60, 61, 64, 67, 68
Domestic value added. 19, 20, 26, 27, 30, 31, 34, 35, 66, 67
Ébène. 29, 54-57
Economic complexity. 24, 25
Financing and fiscal exposure. 54-57, 62, 63
Freeport. 34-38
Human capability. 7, 8, 28, 29, 58-60
Indian Ocean Passerelle. 34-36
Landlord port. 13-16
Madagascar and Toamasina. 16-18, 20-22, 30-34, 47, 48
Maritime diplomacy. 46-52
National gateway. 13-15, 18, 19, 24-27
Non-conversion rule. 60-62
Ocean governance. 46-52, 60, 61
Ocean industries. 36-41
Partner co-authorship. 17, 18, 31, 32, 35, 36, 47, 48
Port Louis Compact. 64-67
Portbase and community systems. 53, 54
Productive circuits. 23-26
Productive Yield. 5, 6, 24-28, 34, 35, 63, 64, 66-68
Recourse. 27, 28, 52-54
Regional fleet and short sea services. 20-22, 30-34, 56, 57
Rival ports and route choice. 16-18, 21, 22
Seafood and testing. 32-34, 37-39, 43-45
Singapore maritime cluster. 20
Source-to-sea. 47-49
Strategic Gates. 11-13, 25, 26
Terminal development. 13-15
Way port. 16-20, 30, 31