

## The blue economy in Seattle, United States

Source: OECD Global Survey on Localising the Blue Economy (2022)



### FACTS AND FIGURES

#### Fact box

- **Population:** 737 015 [1]
- **GDP:** USD 413.8 billion [2]
- **Area:** 369 km<sup>2</sup> [3]

Note: GDP data for the metropolitan area

#### Drivers for the blue economy



Boost economic activity



National laws, regulations and initiatives



Local leadership and commitment

### Blue economy sectors

Seattle, a North American port city on the Pacific Ocean flanked by the Tolt and Cedar Rivers, is home to all sectors of the blue economy below. In 2014, the Port of Seattle and the Port of Tacoma merged all marine cargo operations under the [Northwest Seaport Alliance](#), the fourth-largest port in the United States in terms of the number of containers, which according to its [2019 Marine Cargo Economic Impact analysis](#) directly supported 20 100 jobs and USD 1.9 billion in labour income in 2017.



Seafood



Water-based renewable energy



Shipping



Port activities



Shipbuilding and repair



Water passenger transport and related services



Water-related tourism



Blue bioeconomy, biotechnology and research and education

### BLUE ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

The main environmental impacts of blue economy sectors in Seattle are related to the emission of greenhouse gases, with pollution from plastics and waste generation being other moderate impacts.

#### Top 3 climate threats to the blue economy in Seattle



Changing precipitation patterns and/or hydrological availability



Sea level rise



Flood

[1] U.S. Census Bureau (2021), 2020 Census Redistricting Data, [www.seattle.gov/opcd/population-and-demographics/about-seattle#population](http://www.seattle.gov/opcd/population-and-demographics/about-seattle#population) (accessed 15 March 2023)

[2] Statista Research Department (2022), Seattle metro area - GDP 2001-2021, [www.statista.com/statistics/183863/gdp-of-the-seattle-metro-area/#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20the%20GDP%20of%201990%20can%20be%20accessed%20here](https://www.statista.com/statistics/183863/gdp-of-the-seattle-metro-area/#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20the%20GDP%20of%201990%20can%20be%20accessed%20here)

[3] U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.)

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### GOVERNANCE OF THE BLUE ECONOMY

Published in 2020 with a 2050 horizon, the state of Washington's [Maritime Blue](#) strategy establishes a framework for the acceleration of the blue economy and growth in maritime businesses. Seattle Public Utilities is developing the 50-year [Shape Our Water](#) plan for water resilience. At sectoral level, the [Climate and Air Action Plan](#) of the Port of Seattle launched in 2021, which is aligned with the [2020 Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy](#), aims to mitigate maritime-related greenhouse gas emissions. The Port is also involved in initiatives such as a feasibility study for the development of a hydrogen fuel hub, the development of a [Green Corridor](#) for the deployment of zero greenhouse gas emission ships between Alaska, British Columbia and Washington, and the implementation of nature-based solutions to protect ecosystems from ocean acidification.



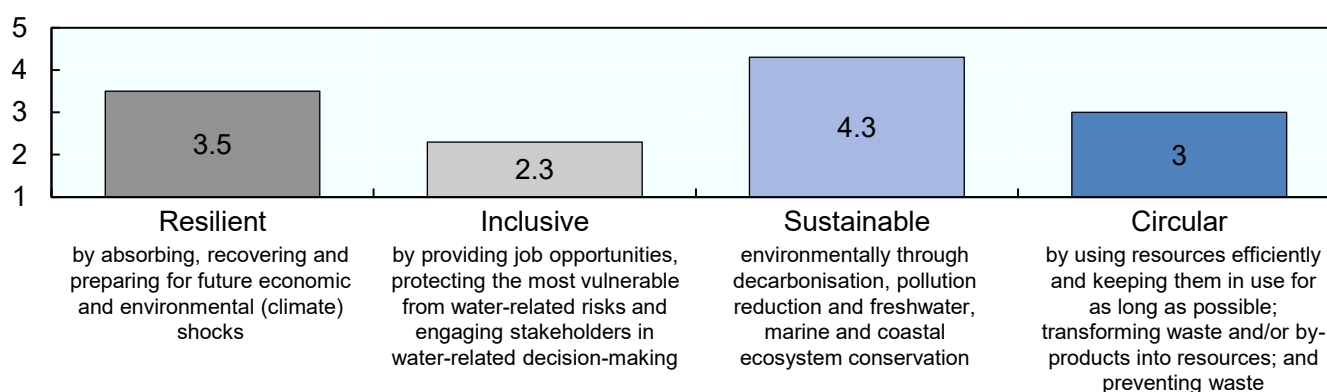
Dedicated budget for the blue economy

#### Funding mechanisms

- Federal government transfers of funds
- Local/regional funds
- Subnational federal government revenue foregone

### THE RISC-PROOF BLUE ECONOMY

(\*)



(\*) Survey respondents were invited to define their level of agreement (with 5 "Agree" and 1 "Disagree") for statements for each of the RISC dimensions (from question 2.1.1 to 2.1.4 of the OECD Global Survey on Localising the Blue Economy (2022)).

### TOP CHALLENGES

- Lack of planning and decision-making at the adequate scale
- Lack of financial resources

### FUTURE PRIORITIES

- Enhance resilience to climate change
- Preserve local culture and traditions linked to aquatic ecosystems
- Create new jobs and business opportunities
- Protect the most vulnerable from negative impacts
- Channel public and private funds towards the blue economy