

Beyond a Silo Mentality Social Capital in the Blue Economy

Alana Knight, Griffith University

Businesses perform an indispensable role in moving society towards sustainability. To recognize the sustainable ambition of the blue economy, businesses must shift away from silo thinking and navigate through complex social networks, collaborations, cooperate behaviors and partnerships; attributes encompassed by social capital. Consequently, there is increased urgency for blue economy industries to acquire tools and data to measure and track social capital-related *impacts*, *dependencies*, *risks* and *opportunities* around their interactions with and investments in social capital. However, practical implementations of rigorous mechanism/s to monitor and evaluate social capital have not yet been tailored to the blue economy, nor fully recognized. This poster provides an overview of the concept of social capital and its fundamental importance to blue economy industries. The question this poster addresses:

*What **IMPACT** will taking account of social capital impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities have on blue economy industries?*

What is Social Capital?

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 252) defined social capital as “the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit.” Seen as a resource, social capital has been proven to enable individuals, societies and businesses to function more effectively. This can be achieved by using social capital to leverage social connections in order to solve problems, improve well-being, pursue shared objectives and take collective action. Examples of social capital characteristics are illustrated below:



I bet you're thinking how?
Well this is where I come in!

Social Impacts, Dependencies, Risks and Opportunities

Impacts

- Results of business activity
- Occur internally and externally, and be either positive or negative

Dependencies

- Extent to which businesses rely on social capital to achieve their objectives
- Reliant on mutual relationships, trust, and shared understandings

Risks

- Possible for businesses to earn profits at the cost of others in the short term, but ignoring negative social impact of business activities will jeopardise businesses bottom line in the long run
- The risks to businesses that ignore social capital – and other forms of non-financial capital – are likely to increase in the near future

Opportunities

- The benefits of investing in social capital extend beyond cost savings and other immediate business opportunities
- By building up their social capital and recognising it as an asset, businesses can increase the value and resilience of their operations

Measuring and Reporting on Social Capital

Working collaboratively with industry partners and government to develop innovative tools and metrics, this project will (i) support corporate disclosure relating to social capital, (ii) compile ocean accounts at regional and local scales, and (iii) contribute to evidence base for a sustainable ocean ambition knowledge platform for the blue economy.

What Impact Does it Have on the Blue Economy?

Obtain and maintain a social licence to operate



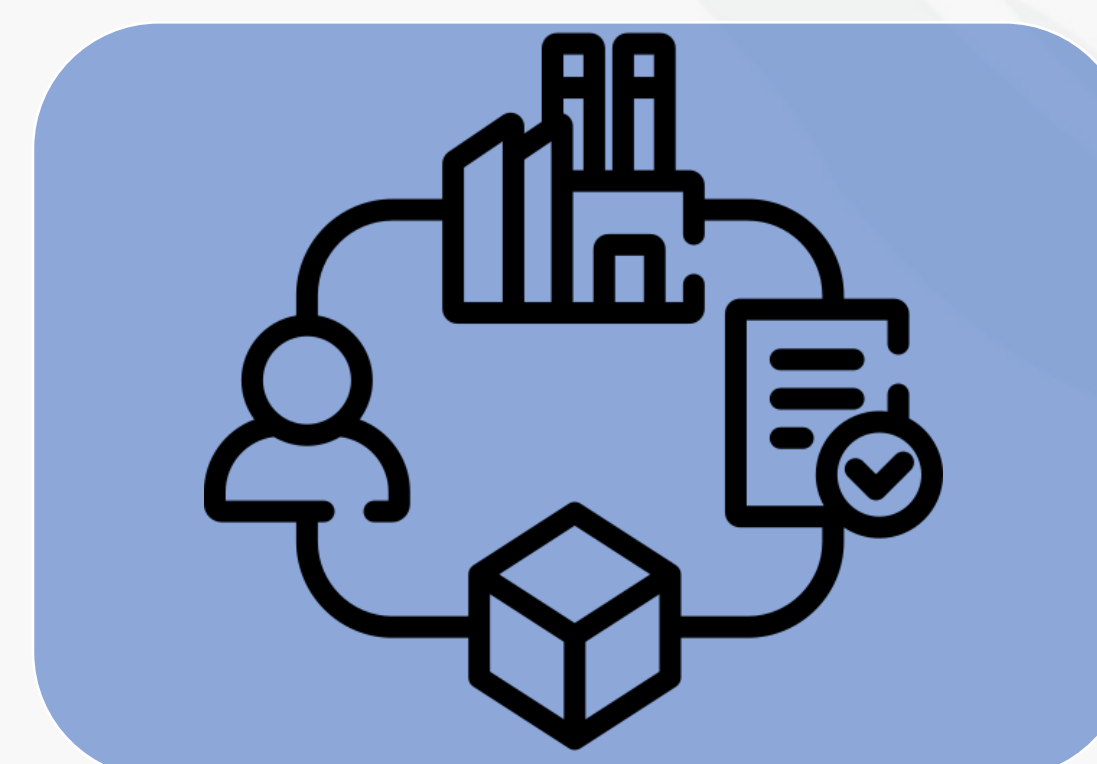
Improve business enabling environments



Optimise human resource management



Strengthen value chains



Fuel product and services growth and innovation

