



# MINISTRY OF AGRO-INDUSTRY, FOOD SECURITY, BLUE ECONOMY AND FISHERIES



## NEWSLETTER **MAY 2026**



### PAGE 4

**Welcome Message from  
Hon. Dr Arvin Boolell.**  
Minister of Agro Industry,  
Food Security, Blue Economy  
& Fisheries

### PAGE 13

**Promoting local ice-cream  
from Innovation to  
Opportunity**

### PAGE 16

**Fisheries Division**

### PAGE 20

**Blue Economy and the  
Big Ocean State:  
Setting up of a  
Blue Economy Unit**

### Agro-Industry & Food Security Division



+230 212 0854



moaheadoffice@govmu.org



<https://agriculture.govmu.org>

### Blue Economy & Fisheries Division



+230 211 2470



fishadmin@govmu.org  
blueeconomy@govmu.org



<https://blueeconomy.govmu.org>



# TABLE OF CONTENT

---

<b>WELCOME NOTE</b>	<b>04-05</b>
<b>TOWARDS FOOD SECURITY : ASSISES DE L'AGRICULTURE 2026</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>NEW CANE VARIETIES PROMISE BOOST FOR MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>ENSURING SAFE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THROUGH RESPONSIBLE PESTICIDE USE IN MAURITIUS</b>	<b>08-09</b>
<b>SENSITISATION AND EDUCATIONAL TALK BY MSAW</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MASS STERILISATION CAMPAIGN</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>ADVANCING DAIRY GOAT PRODUCTION IN MAURITIUS AND RODRIGUES: A PATHWAY TO IMPROVED NUTRITION, FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>PROMOTING LOCAL ICE-CREAM FROM INNOVATION TO OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>CREATION OF ENDEMIC GARDENS AND AMIGOS (NEWBORN) TREE PLANTING PROJECT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>VALLÉE D'OSTERLOG: A LIVING SANCTUARY OF MAURITIUS</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ESTABLISHING THE RIGHT FOUNDATION FOR DIGITALISATION</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>FISHERIES DIVISION (DEC 2025-MARCH 2026)</b>	<b>17-20</b>
<b>BLUE ECONOMY AND THE BIG OCEAN STATE: SETTING UP OF A BLUE ECONOMY UNIT</b>	<b>21-25</b>
<b>MAURITIUS DELEGATION AT THE MONACO BLUE INITIATIVE (MBI) AND BLUE ECONOMY FINANCE FORUM (BEFF)</b>	<b>26</b>

# WELCOME NOTE

“

My message today marks the release of our first **Newsletter**. This initiative reflects our Ministry's commitment to transparency, knowledge-sharing, and inclusive dialogue with all stakeholders in the agriculture and fisheries sectors.

Agriculture remains central to our nation's resilience. In the face of climate change, global market volatility, and the need to reduce import dependency, we must strengthen communication channels that empower farmers, entrepreneurs, researchers, and communities. Our institutions have worked hand in hand with farmers, entrepreneurs, and international partners to deliver concrete results that strengthen food security, modernise practices, and advance food sovereignty.

At the same time, we are broadening our national vision by embracing the immense potential of the ocean and the blue economy. As a Big Ocean State, Mauritius possesses a vast Exclusive Economic Zone that offers significant opportunities for sustainable development, innovation, and economic diversification.

The newsletter will serve as:

- **A source of information** on policies, programmes, and innovations.
- **A tool for capacity building**, highlighting training, technologies, and best practices.
- **A platform for engagement**, ensuring that the voices of farmers, youth, and women are heard in shaping our agricultural future.

This message is about reaffirming our collective vision: food sovereignty, modernisation of production, sustainable ocean governance, and inclusive livelihoods for all. Agriculture and the blue economy remain essential pillars of our food security, our economy, and our national identity. ”



**Dr the Hon Arvin BOOLELL, GOSK**  
Minister of Agro-Industry,  
Food Security, Blue Economy  
& Fisheries

# WELCOME NOTE

---

“ Welcome to this new edition of our Ministry’s newsletter, which reflects a simple but ambitious vision: strengthening Mauritius’ food security by harnessing the full potential of both our land and our ocean.

Over the past months, our Ministry has organised two landmark national consultations: Les Assises de l’Agriculture and Les Assises de l’Océan. Though focused on different domains, they are guided by one common objective: building a more resilient, innovative and self-reliant Mauritius.

On land, we are transforming agriculture to meet the realities of climate change, rising energy costs and geopolitical uncertainty. Through precision agriculture, improved seeds, regenerative practices, training and agro-processing, we are empowering farmers, attracting youth and diversifying production.

At sea, we are embracing the extraordinary opportunity offered by our Exclusive Economic Zone, which is more than 1,000 times larger than our land territory. As a Big Ocean State, Mauritius is developing a new economic frontier, from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to marine biotechnology, ocean renewable energy and blue carbon.

From ridge to reef, our approach is truly integrated. Seaweed becomes compost that nourishes our soils, seagrass meadows act as powerful carbon sinks, mangroves protect our coasts and innovation creates value across the entire food system. This is our own Mauritian version of “fish and chips” — agriculture and fisheries working hand in hand to feed the nation, create jobs and preserve our natural heritage.

Together, we are cultivating a greener economy on land, shaping a blue economy at sea, and strengthening Mauritius’ resilience, sovereignty and prosperity for present and future generations. ”



**Hon. Gilles Fabrice David**  
Junior Minister

Ministry of Agro-Industry,  
Food Security, Blue Economy  
& Fisheries

# 1. Towards Food Sovereignty: Assises de l'Agriculture 2026



Mauritius currently imports around 70% of its food requirements, leaving the nation exposed to global price volatility, supply chain disruptions, and climate-induced shocks. This dependency undermines food security, livelihoods, and national sovereignty. The **Assises de l'Agriculture 2026** responds to these systemic challenges with a multidimensional transformation agenda, aligned with the **National Food Security Programme (2026–2030)**.

In preparation for the Assises, extensive pre-consultative processes were undertaken from September 2025 onwards, grounded in an agri-food systems framework. These consultations recognised that resilience depends not only on farm-level production but also on upstream and downstream factors such as input systems, markets, institutions, natural resources, nutrition, and public health. Using a bottom-up and participatory approach, perspectives were gathered from planters, breeders, agro-processors, agri-entrepreneurs, producer organisations, private-sector actors, civil-society groups, youth, and public institutions. Engagements included island-wide liaison meetings, sectoral consultations for crops and livestock, youth forums, corporate dialogues, and inter-ministerial discussions.

Based on these exchanges, **ten thematic areas** were identified to capture the broad spectrum of constraints and opportunities shaping the sector:

- **Food Sovereignty & Resilient Production Systems** – Expanding staple crop and livestock production, mechanisation, and value chains.
- **Conservation of Genetic Resources** – Establishing seed banks, breeding centres, and farmer-led seed systems.
- **Climate Resilience & Disaster Preparedness** – Deploying AI-based forecasting, buffer stocks, and climate-smart practices.
- **Regenerative & Circular Agriculture** – Promoting composting, biogas, and waste-to-resource initiatives.
- **One Health Approach** – Integrating soil, water, plant, and animal health management.
- **Nutrition Security & Food Safety** – Strengthening food safety systems, promoting biofortified crops, and reducing ultra-processed food consumption.
- **Value Chains & Market Differentiation** – Developing agro-processing, branding (“Bio Mauritius”), and agro-tourism linkages.
- **Empowering Smallholders, Women & Youth** – Expanding land access, financing, training, and entrepreneurship support.
- **Information & AgriTech** – Establishing a National Agricultural Digital Infrastructure and promoting precision agriculture.
- **Governance & Financing** – Creating a dedicated coordination mechanism, strengthening policy coherence, and establishing a Banque Agricole.

## 2. New Cane Varieties Promise Boost for Mauritius' Sugar Industry

The Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA) is the backbone of the island's sugarcane sector, ensuring that one of Mauritius' oldest and most iconic industries continues to thrive in a changing world. Established in 2012, the MCIA brought together several institutions under one umbrella to streamline operations, strengthen regulation, and modernise the industry.

Mauritius' sugarcane sector is set for a fresh wave of innovation. The Cane Release Committee of the Mauritius Sugarcane Industry Research Institute (MSIRI) has unveiled three new varieties: M66, M67 and M68, each designed to deliver higher yields, greater resilience, and new opportunities for both sugar and biomass production. Sugarcane remains a cornerstone of Mauritius' economy and heritage, and the release of these varieties comes at a time when farmers are seeking solutions to climate challenges, disease resistance, and the need to diversify production.

### M66: High Yields, Island-Wide Resilience.

M66 stands out for its tall, thick stalks and strong ratooning ability. It consistently delivers higher cane yields than current commercial varieties. While its sucrose content is slightly lower, the use of artificial ripeners boosts sugar recovery. Resistant to major diseases and largely unaffected by pests, M66 can be cultivated across Mauritius and is best suited for late harvests.

### M67: Strong Performer in Super humid Zones.

M67 offers high cane and sugar yields with strong sucrose content throughout the harvest season. Its stalks are tall and erect, though trashing is difficult. With good germination and ratooning ability, it shows resilience against most diseases, with only slight susceptibility to yellow spot. M67 thrives in most agro-climatic zones but performs best in super humid regions for early to mid-harvest.

### M68: A 'Canne-Mixte' for Sugar and Biomass

M68 is notable for its uniform stalks and exceptional fibre content, making it suitable for both sugar and biomass production. It surpasses commercial standards in humid and sub-humid regions, with strong ratooning ability and high yields. Resistant to gumming and brown rust, it is slightly vulnerable to smut and more susceptible to yellow spot and leaf scald. M68 is best suited for mid- to late-harvests.



The release of these varieties marks a strategic step in modernising Mauritius' sugarcane industry, balancing traditional sugar production with new biomass opportunities. For farmers, the promise is clear: higher yields, greater resilience, and more options to adapt to changing environments



### 3. Ensuring Safe Fruits and Vegetables through Responsible Pesticide Use in Mauritius



#### Introduction

The production of safe fruits and vegetables begins with the responsible and judicious use of pesticides. Farmers are expected to use only registered and recommended products for specific crops and pests, strictly adhering to label instructions on dosage, application methods, and frequency. Overuse or misuse of pesticides increases the risk of residues exceeding permitted limits, posing threats to human health and the environment. Equally, the use of non-recommended products on crops can result in unsafe residues and must be avoided.

#### The Pesticides Regulatory Office (PRO)

Established under the *Use of Pesticides Act 2018*, the Pesticides Regulatory Office (PRO) serves as the national authority overseeing pesticide regulation, control, and monitoring. Its key responsibilities include:

- Regulating and monitoring pesticide use on agricultural produce
- Developing strategies for effective pesticide management and risk reduction
- Maintaining relevant pesticide information systems
- Devising a Pesticide Code of Practice
- Advising the Minister on pesticide-related matters

#### Activities of the PRO

The PRO undertakes a series of activities to ensure compliance and safeguard consumer health:

- **Sample Collection:** Weekly sampling of fruits and vegetables from markets, supermarkets, wholesale points, farm gates, and ports of entry. Samples are analyzed at the Food Technology Laboratory (FTL).
- **Review of Results:** Residue levels are checked against recommended pesticides and maximum residue limits (MRLs).
- **Communication of Results:** Findings are shared with growers and suppliers and published online.
- **Issuance of Improvement Notices:** Non-compliance cases trigger formal notices under the *Use of Pesticides Act 2018*.
- **Sensitisation and Follow-up:** In collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI), growers are sensitised and guided towards compliance.
- **Complaint Handling:** Complaints regarding misuse are investigated, and advice is provided.

## Regulatory Action

In 2025, a total of **86 Improvement Notices** were issued for samples that exceeded MRLs or contained non-recommended pesticides, reinforcing the PRO's enforcement role under the Act.



## Conclusion

The PRO emphasises that MRLs are set with safety margins to protect consumers. Non-compliance cases are followed up through additional sampling, farmer sensitisation, and enforcement actions. By working closely with growers, the Office continues to promote responsible pesticide use and compliance with the *Use of Pesticides Act 2018*. Pesticide residue monitoring remains a cornerstone of food safety and quality assurance in Mauritius.

## Regulations under Preparation

To strengthen enforcement of the *Use of Pesticides Act 2018*, four draft regulations are being prepared under the UNDP project *Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS)*, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). These include:

- I. **Use of Pesticides (Pesticides Maximum Residue Limits for Local and Imported Produce) Regulations 2026**
- II. **Use of Pesticides (Sampling of Local and Imported Produce for Pesticide Residue Testing) Regulations 2026**
- III. **Use of Pesticides (Mixing and Application of Pesticides in Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Areas and Disposal of Empty Pesticide Containers) Regulations 2026**
- IV. **Use of Pesticides (Training and Certification of Pesticides Users) Regulations 2026**

## 4 Sensitisation and education talk by MSAW

The Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare (MSAW) is the national body mandated to promote animal welfare and implement humane solutions to the challenges posed by stray populations across the island. Established to safeguard both public health and animal wellbeing, MSAW works closely with government ministries, municipalities, NGOs, and communities to deliver programmes that combine compassion, science, and policy. Its initiatives range from shelter management and adoption services to sterilisation campaigns, microchipping, and awareness drives, all designed to foster responsible pet ownership and reduce the number of stray animals in Mauritius.



The awareness campaigns rolled out alongside the sterilisation programme have been a vital pillar of MSAW's strategy. Educational talks were delivered to employees of various organisations, schools and universities as well as scout groups, each tailored to their specific contexts. These sessions highlighted the responsibilities of pet ownership, practical approaches to coping with stray dogs, and the critical role of sterilisation in controlling animal populations humanely. By engaging professionals, future legal practitioners, and young leaders, MSAW ensured that the message resonated across different sectors of society. The campaigns not only informed but also inspired participants to become advocates for animal welfare, creating ripple effects in workplaces, academic institutions, and community networks. This multi-stakeholder approach demonstrates how awareness and education can complement direct interventions, reinforcing the sustainability of Mauritius' animal welfare initiatives.



## 5. Mass Sterilisation Campaign

The Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare (**MSAW**) made history on 27 September 2025 by hosting the country's first mass sterilisation event for cats and dogs at the Municipal Council yard in Quatre-Bornes. This landmark initiative was designed to address the growing challenge of stray animals in a humane and sustainable way, while also promoting responsible pet ownership among citizens. The event brought together veterinarians, volunteers, and local authorities, offering free sterilisation services, microchipping, and pet registration. It also served as a platform for adoption drives and awareness campaigns, ensuring that the public understood the importance of long-term animal welfare practices.



By situating the programme in a municipal space, **MSAW** reinforced transparency and accessibility, encouraging community participation and trust. The event not only delivered immediate results by sterilising dozens of cats and dogs but also symbolised a broader policy shift towards integrating animal welfare into public health and safety strategies. Senior officials from the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security highlighted the importance of such campaigns in reducing disease transmission, preventing road accidents, and strengthening community resilience. Looking ahead, **MSAW** announced plans to replicate these sterilisation drives across other regions of Mauritius, supported by awareness programmes and stronger legislative frameworks such as mandatory microchipping.



**This first mass sterilisation event stands as a milestone in Mauritius' journey toward modernising animal welfare systems, combining compassion, science, and policy to create a healthier environment for both people and animals.**

## 6. Advancing Dairy Goat Production in Mauritius and Rodrigues: A pathway to improved nutrition, food security and livelihoods



Dairy goat farming is emerging as a sustainable alternative to conventional livestock production, offering resilience to land, feed, and climate challenges. Despite its nutritional and medicinal benefits, goat milk remains underutilised locally, with fresh milk rarely available and imports priced as niche products.

**Strategic Initiative** : The Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI), in partnership with FAO, has launched a project to promote dairy goat milk production. This initiative aligns with national development strategies and global goals on poverty reduction, food security, and improved nutrition.



### Key Interventions

1. **Genetic improvement:** Importation of frozen semen from Saanen and Alpine breeds to enhance milk yield and herd performance.
2. **Modern breeding practices:** Training technicians in artificial insemination and ultrasound pregnancy diagnosis for better herd management.
3. **Value addition:** Supporting farmers to diversify into cheese, yogurt, flavoured milk, and non-food products like soap and skincare.
4. **Capacity building:** Introducing Farmers Field School approach for participatory learning on dairy goat farming and resilient farming system.
5. **Awareness campaigns:** Workshops across Mauritius and Rodrigues to highlight dairy goat farming as a profitable and sustainable activity.



### Expected Impacts

- Empowering farmers, including women and youth, to improve household nutrition and income.
- Establishing small dairy goat farms and upgrading local goat genetics.
- Creating agri-business opportunities on innovative products.

**Towards Resilience** : With lower investment needs and adaptability to local conditions, dairy goat farming has the potential to contribute to a resilient farming system. This collaborative effort lays the foundation for reducing dependency on imported dairy products while enhancing livelihoods and nutrition in Mauritius and Rodrigues.



## 7. Promoting local ice-cream from innovation to opportunity

Promoting local artisanal ice cream is more than a culinary innovation, and it is a strategic opportunity to strengthen Mauritius' agro-processing sector and reduce reliance on imports. Ice cream has long been a beloved part of Mauritian culture, enjoyed by locals and tourists alike, from traditional sorbets to modern gelatos. Yet, despite strong demand, the market remains dominated by multinational brands, with imports in 2024 alone reaching 975 tonnes valued at Rs 275 million. To address this dependency and unlock new value for local producers, the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) has pioneered the production of authentic, high-quality artisanal ice cream made with fresh milk and locally sourced ingredients.

The initiative seeks to enhance value addition, support small businesses, and create employment opportunities by equipping entrepreneurs with modern, efficient production techniques. It addresses key challenges such as limited differentiation of local products, underutilisation of raw materials such as fresh milk and tropical fruits, and rising consumer demand for natural, premium, locally branded goods. Through hands-on training, demonstrations, and continuous technical support, FAREI ensures that participants gain practical skills across the full production cycle—from preparation and hygiene to packaging and marketing, while strengthening linkages with the agricultural sector.

Compared to imported products, the new artisanal ice cream offers smoother textures, natural flavours, and a distinctly Mauritian identity. It retains more value within the country, supports local farmers, and fosters entrepreneurship. By combining innovation, skills development, and market-oriented promotion, this initiative demonstrates how local resources can be leveraged to create high-value products that meet evolving consumer preferences and contribute to sustainable agro-industrial growth. Artisanal ice cream is thus not only a refreshing treat but also a driver of resilience, opportunity, and national pride.



## 8. Creation of Endemic Gardens and Amigos (Newborn) Tree Planting Project

In August 2025, the Forestry Service, in collaboration with SBM Ltd, embarked on an inspiring journey to green Mauritius by establishing **endemic gardens** across SBM branches. This initiative is more than a landscaping effort, and it is a commitment to restoring native biodiversity, enhancing tree cover, and building resilience against climate change. By aligning with **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**, **SDG 15 (Life on Land)**, and **SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)**, the project demonstrates how public-private partnerships can deliver tangible environmental and social benefits.

The Forestry Service has provided technical expertise and native plant species, ensuring that each garden reflects the island's unique ecological heritage. These gardens serve as living classrooms, raising awareness among employees, clients, and communities about the importance of protecting endemic species and preventing land degradation.

Adding a deeply symbolic dimension, the Amigos (Newborn) Tree Planting Project was launched alongside the gardens. For each newborn, a tree is planted - creating a lasting bond between future generations and the environment.

This initiative celebrates life while instilling stewardship and sustainability from the earliest stages, reminding us that caring for nature is inseparable from caring for people.

Together, these projects embody a holistic vision of sustainable development:

- **Environmental impact:** Expanding green cover, restoring degraded land, and strengthening carbon sequestration.
- **Social impact:** Fostering community engagement, intergenerational participation, and environmental awareness.
- **Institutional impact:** Showcasing effective collaboration between government agencies and the private sector.

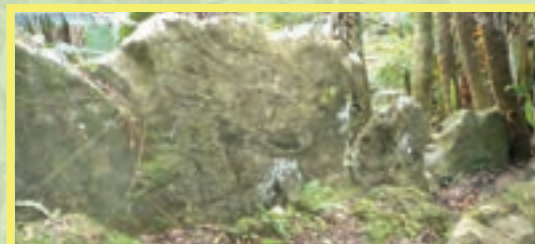
**By weaving ecological restoration with social symbolism, the programme positions Mauritius as a leader in integrated climate action and biodiversity conservation. It is a powerful reminder that every garden planted and every tree nurtured is a step toward a greener, more resilient future for all.**

## 9. Vallée d'Osterlog: A Living Sanctuary of Mauritius

The Vallée d'Osterlog Endemic Garden, situated at Le Val, stands as a living sanctuary dedicated to safeguarding Mauritius' unique natural heritage. Established under the Foundation Act of 2007, the Garden was formally inaugurated on 11 June 2014 with the creation of a Visitor Centre, new trails, and interpretive signage to enhance public engagement and awareness of the island's biodiversity.

Despite its promise, management under the previous administration faced challenges in maintenance and organisation, limiting conservation outcomes. To address these shortcomings, the Vallée d'Osterlog Endemic Garden Foundation (Repeal) Act 2025 (Act No. 5 of 2025) came into force, repealing the 2007 Act and transferring management of the Garden to the National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS).

Nestled between Mount Lagrave and Mount Laselle in the south-east of Mauritius, the Garden spans approximately 275 hectares. It provides a sanctuary for rare and endemic flora and fauna, while offering visitors immersive trails, scenic viewpoints, and opportunities to reconnect with nature. Its reopening marks not only a revitalisation of ecological management but also a broader vision to strengthen public appreciation of Mauritius' natural treasures. On World Wetlands Day 2026, the Garden was officially reopened by Minister Arvin Boolell, who underscored the Garden's role as a symbol of ecological restoration and cultural heritage. A Jewel Worth Preserving.



Often described as a "precious jewel" of the nation's biodiversity, Vallée d'Osterlog reflects Mauritius' strong commitment to conservation and the sustainable use of ecosystem services. Managed by the National Park Service, the site is now positioned to protect endangered species while promoting sustainable ecotourism.

As visitors rediscover this hidden gem, they are reminded that preserving such landscapes is essential not only for nature but also for the well-being of present and future generations. The Garden's reopening marks a new chapter in ecological stewardship: one that blends conservation, education, and community engagement into a lasting legacy.

# Establishing the Right Foundation for Digitalisation

A one-day workshop on Establishing the Right Foundation for Digitalisation was held on Monday, 1st June 2026, bringing together 60 participants from the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries and the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation. The event marked a pivotal step towards modernising the agricultural sector through technology and innovation and towards strengthening the Ministry's digital transformation agenda.

## Leadership Perspectives at a Glance

### Hon Fabrice David

***"Technology and AI must drive transformation."***

Institutions must evolve with agriculture to ensure no planter or farmer is left behind.



### Hon Dr Avinash Ramtohol

***"Centralized data for smarter decisions."***

A national database will strengthen communication during crises and enable data-driven policy-making.



### Hon Dr Arvin Boolell

***"Collaboration is key to practical AI."***

Departments and stakeholders must work together to ensure accessible, user-friendly solutions, while tackling challenges such as information gaps for planters and labour shortages.



## Workshop Highlights and Key Pillars

The workshop featured presentations from various institutions that identified operational bottlenecks and explored technological solutions to strengthen the Ministry's digital transformation agenda. The Data Protection Commissioner delivered an insightful presentation on managing and protecting personal data for planters and stakeholders, a cornerstone of trust and transparency in the digital era. Working groups were established around key pillars, including food crops monitoring, financing and agri innovation, national information platforms, digital decision making tools, producer to consumer platforms, capacity building and inclusiveness, promotion of precision agriculture, and youth engagement.

## Charting the Way Forward

The outcomes of these discussions will serve as a strategic roadmap for digital transformation within the Ministry. By embedding technology into every layer of agricultural governance, Mauritius is setting the stage for a connected, data driven, and inclusive agricultural future. This initiative reinforces the nation's commitment to resilience, innovation, and sustainable growth, ensuring that digitalisation becomes a cornerstone of agricultural progress.

## FISHERIES DIVISION ( December 2025 – March 2026)

### Executive Summary

During the period under review, the Blue Economy and Fisheries Division recorded significant progress in advancing sustainable fisheries management, aquaculture development, capacity building, and maritime surveillance. Key achievements include enhanced seed production and marine ranching initiatives, strengthened fisheries data systems and international reporting, expanded training programmes for stakeholders, and improved monitoring, control and surveillance through advanced digital platforms.

#### ● Aquaculture Division

The Aquaculture Division continued its work in promoting sustainable aquaculture development, with activities centred on seed production, marine ranching, extension services and sector support. The Division remained engaged in the production and distribution of juveniles of commercially valuable species, including red tilapia, freshwater prawn, silver seabream and sandfish, while also providing technical advice and monitoring support to promoters and fish farmers.



Figure 2: Larval Rearing of *Macrobranchium rosenbergii*

The Division also continued with sandfish seed production under the Sandfish Resource Enhancement Programme, with a second hatchery run yielding around 895,000 eggs and 9,390 juveniles stocked for rearing.

The Division distributed 890 berri rouge fingerlings free of charge to 16 individuals for tank and pond aquaculture, sold 50 fingerlings to one farmer, sold 640 fingerlings to four farmers for aquaponics, and distributed 40 fingerlings free of charge to two individuals for an aquaponic project.



Figure 1: Berri Rouge fingerlings

In addition, 128,690 freshwater prawn juveniles were produced and sold to 56 persons. The marine ranching programme also recorded significant progress. A total of 60,100 silver seabream fingerlings (*Rhabdosargus sarba*) were released at several sites, namely Blue Bay Marine Park, Bras d'eau Fishing Reserve, Balaclava Marine Park, Black River, Poudre d'Or Fishing Reserve, Grand Rivière Sud Est, Sable Noir and Albion.



Figure 3: Marine ranching of seabream fingerlings

## ● Aquaculture Division

Under the JICA-supported project on the improvement of livelihoods of coastal communities, the Division also continued sea urchin breeding and training activities for fishers in Mahebourg and Grand Rivière Sud Est.

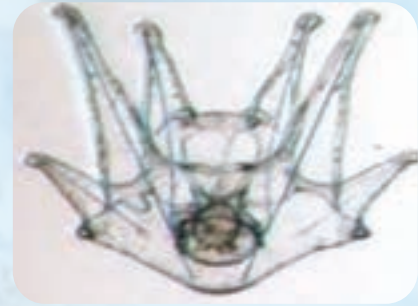


Figure 4: Sea urchin larvae



Figure 5: Phytoplankton production room

In parallel, phytoplankton and zooplankton culture remained ongoing at AFRC to support larval feeding and hatchery operations.

The Division further provided extension services to the sector, with officers offering technical information to 26 visitors during the reporting period. It also continued monitoring aquaculture projects and advancing the development of new hatchery infrastructure at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre to strengthen future seed production capacity

## ● Marine Resources Division

The Marine Resources Division continued its core responsibilities in fisheries research, stock assessment, monitoring of fishing activities and dissemination of fisheries information. The Pelagic Fishery Unit monitored tuna catch data through logbooks from local-flagged tuna vessels and licensed foreign vessels calling at Port Louis. During the period under review, the national fleet targeting tuna and tuna-like species comprised three purse seine vessels and one support vessel, with seven fishing trips by fishing vessels and one trip by the supply vessel since January 2026.

The Division also maintained active engagement with the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), including the submission of the Compliance Questionnaire and Implementation Report through EMARIS. In addition, the authorisation periods of purse seine and supply vessels were updated on E-RAV for 2026, while the e-DFAD system continued its mandatory test phase to improve the monitoring of FAD use and compliance.

In the Offshore Demersal Fishery, 72 logbooks were collected, verified and processed, corresponding to a total catch landed of 284 tonnes between January and March 2026. Three sampling exercises were undertaken, with 476 specimens of *Lethrinus mahsena* sampled. The unit also monitored 72 fishing trips in relation to quota allocation and prepared various data submissions for internal units, Statistics Mauritius, the Fisheries Protection Service, the Licensing Unit and the Planning Unit.

## ● Marine Resources Division

At the regional and international level, the Division contributed to SIOFA scientific work through the submission of national proposals and the Annual National Report, and participated in the 11th Scientific Committee Meeting in Fremantle, Australia. It also took part in the 13th Session of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission in Comoros and the Working Group on Fisheries Socio Economics and Expert Training in Mozambique.

The Coastal Fishery Unit remained active in species identification, specimen examination and octopus monitoring. During the period, 33 fish specimens from six occurrence books were received for identification and examination, 24 specimens were submitted by the Laboratories Division, and 22 octopus specimens were sampled at Grand Gaube/Melville and Grand Rivière Sud Est following the seasonal closure.



Figure 6: Octopus Sampling

The Division also continued implementation of the Electronic Reporting System, funded by the European Union, to support near real-time catch reporting for local and foreign vessels. A two-day workshop was held to train officers on the THEMIS interface and the Fishlog 2.0 application, supporting the transition toward more efficient digital reporting.

## ● Fisheries Training and Extension Centre

FITEC continued to play an important role in strengthening the skills of fishers and fishmongers, improving post-harvest practices and supporting offshore fishing development.

Under the Fish Aggregating Devices programme, sea trips were conducted for the setting up, verification, repair and maintenance of both traditional Rosary-type FADs and SMART FADs. As at March 2026, 17 FADs were active out of 28 deployed, contributing to the diversification of fishing effort and improved access to fish resources.



Figure 7 : SMART FAD

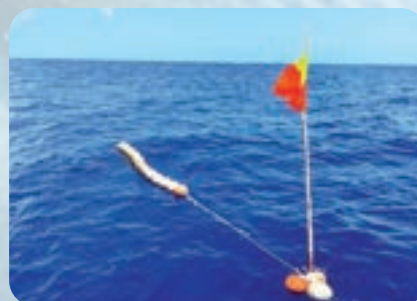


Figure 8 : Rosary-type FAD

The Centre also delivered a Fish Handling, Preservation and Marketing Course for Fishmongers, benefiting 137 participants, comprising 95 males and 42 females, between October 2025 and March 2026. The course aimed to improve knowledge on fish freshness, quality preservation, food safety and value addition.

Under the JICA project on the improvement of livelihoods of coastal communities, 47 registered fishers, including 44 males and 3 females, were trained in new fishing techniques for offshore marine resources by an international consultant. The training combined theoretical sessions and practical offshore exercises, with the objective of developing a core group of fishers capable of exploiting potential off-lagoon resources sustainably.



Figure 9 : Training of Fishmongers



Figure 10 : Training at Sea

FITEC also maintained its ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System certification following the renewal of its registration by the Mauritius Standards Bureau, reflecting its continued commitment to quality assurance and institutional excellence.

# Blue Economy and the Big Ocean State: Setting up of a Blue Economy Unit

## 2.2 million km<sup>2</sup>



### Exclusive Economic Zone

Exerting sovereignty over an ocean space of 2.2 million km<sup>2</sup>, the Republic of Mauritius possesses the largest Exclusive Economic Zone among Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and ranks among the most extensive globally. This represents an ocean territory which is over 1050 times larger than its landmass, with an enormous ecological and economic potential being fundamental for the country to transition from SIDS to Big Ocean State in this era of climate change.



Yet, despite this strategic leverage, blue economic sectors' contribution to the national GDP of the country remains limited to nearly 10.3% which led this Ministry to reinforce its existing policy and legal framework to transform the ocean-based economic activities to the next economic pillar of Mauritius.

### ● The setting up of a Blue Economy Unit

As per the Budget Speech 2025/2026, "a vast investment corridor will be opened in the blue economy... our focus will be on six strategic ocean economy sectors", namely;

- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture;
- Ocean-Based Renewable Energy;
- Sustainable Ocean Tourism;
- Marine Transport and Trade;
- Research, Capacity Building and Innovation; and
- Blue Finance.



### ● The setting up of a Blue Economy Unit

These sectors are cross cutting and involve different Ministries and Departments. In order to gather these departments/ministries under the same roof, an interim Blue Economy Unit at the level of the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries was established on 01 July 2025. Accordingly, officers from technical cadre from the Fisheries and Shipping Divisions, the Mauritius Oceanography Institute and the Competent Authority (Fisheries) have been posted on a temporary part-time basis to the Unit to support its work which is being headed by Dr S. Ramah, Scientific Officer (Fisheries), as Acting Head of the Unit.

#### Objectives of the Unit



## Ocean Talks to Ocean Action: The road to Les Assises de L'océan 2025

**What is the objective of Les Assises de l'Océan 2025?**

*Les Assises de l'Océan 2025* aims to establish a coordinated and forward-looking framework for sustainable ocean governance in Mauritius. The initiative seeks to strengthen climate resilience, protect marine biodiversity, and unlock economic opportunities within the blue economy, while ensuring inclusive and sustainable development. It reflects Mauritius' ambition to position the ocean as a key driver of national prosperity, innovation, and environmental stewardship.

### How are les Assises de l'Océan 2025 aligned with international frameworks?

The Assises are strategically aligned with key global commitments to ensure coherence between national priorities and international obligations. These include the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14: Life Below Water; the Paris Agreement and its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs); the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). This alignment ensures that Mauritius contributes effectively to global efforts in climate action, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable ocean management.



Fig 2: Highlights of the 10-days pre-consultative dialogues

### How was the consultative process structured?

The preparatory process for the Assises was conducted in two distinct phases to ensure both inclusivity and strategic alignment.

The first phase consisted of pre-consultative dialogues held from 07 to 18 October 2025, bringing together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including government institutions, regional organisations, academia, private sector representatives, civil society, and local communities. This phase aimed to capture diverse perspectives, foster open and constructive dialogue, and identify key challenges and opportunities across the blue economy. This participatory approach further reinforced transparency, inclusivity, and a shared sense of responsibility in shaping the country's ocean governance framework.

The second phase involved a more targeted consultative workshop held on 10 March 2026 at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy (MMTA). This session engaged specific ministries, institutions, and key organisations with the objective of refining the recommendations, prioritising actions, and identifying concrete implementation mechanisms.



Fig 3: Photo from the Consultative workshop.  
(Source GIS Mauritius)

**What were the key thematic areas discussed?**

The consultations were structured around ten key thematic areas reflecting the breadth of the blue economy. These included climate change, biodiversity and conservation, education and marine jobs, sustainable marine tourism, research and development, ICT and innovation, youth, gender and social awareness (Part I and II), marine renewable energy, green ports, maritime transport and trade, fisheries, aquaculture and food security, blue diplomacy and ocean governance, and blue finance. These themes enabled stakeholders to address sector-specific challenges while identifying cross-cutting priorities such as financing, governance, capacity-building, and regional cooperation.

**What was the outcome of the consultative dialogues?**

The dialogues served as a platform for knowledge exchange, consensus-building, and strategic alignment. They facilitated the identification of priority actions, strengthened collaboration among stakeholders, and highlighted innovative solutions to support sustainable ocean development. Importantly, the process reinforced the principle that dialogue must lead to action, ensuring that the recommendations are practical, actionable, and aligned with national development objectives.

**How was the report validated?**

Following the consultative workshop, the outcomes and recommendations were consolidated and formally validated on 10 April 2026 at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy (MMTA). This validation phase ensured coherence, stakeholder agreement, and official endorsement of the proposed roadmap for implementation.

**What is the way forward?**

The multi-stakeholder consultative process has established a strong and coherent foundation for “*Les Assises de l’Océan*”, which will be held during the Mauritius Ocean Week 2026 from Monday 04 to Friday 08 May 2026. The week-long programme will comprise high-level panel discussions, Blue Talks, exhibitions, beach clean-up activities, visits to *Trochetia*, as well as open days at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre and the Mauritius Oceanography Institute. By aligning national priorities with international frameworks, engaging a broad range of stakeholders, and structuring discussions around key thematic areas, Mauritius is well-positioned to advance a coordinated and sustainable blue economy agenda. The outcomes of these consultations and exchanges will guide deliberations during *Les Assises de l’Océan* and support long-term efforts to safeguard marine ecosystems while fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

# The Republic of Mauritius strengthening its Blue Economy Policy and Legal Framework

## ● Strengthening the Policy Framework with the Blue Economy Strategy

Mauritius embarked in its first major policy framework formulation in 2013 with the Ocean Economy Roadmap. The government strengthened this policy framework with the programme “Bridge to the Future: 2025-2029”, aiming to position the blue economy as a major pillar of the national development.

On 19 January 2026, this Ministry took a significant step forward with the signing of the National Blue Economy Strategy with a consortium of consultants represented by the company Valinor Energy Analytics Ltd. The contract is of a duration of six months and is funded by the European Union funded to the tune of Rs 3.7 million under the sectoral support programme.



Fig 4: Signature of contract between the Ministry and Valinor Energy Analytics Ltd.

The strategy aims to position Mauritius as a regional leader in sustainable ocean management transitioning into a Big Ocean State while also targeting the diversification of the economic activities by tapping into marine-based industries (e.g. aquaculture, marine renewable energy, biotechnology, green port and maritime transport, among others). The objectives of the action plan will be to:

- i. Identify short, medium and long-term actions, ensuring a cross-sectoral and inclusive approach, that support sustainable blue economy growth
- ii. Provide a foundation for regional actions related to the blue economy, thereby maximizing the economic potential of the country's ocean and inland water resources.

## ● The Blue Economy Bill bringing legal coherence

Complementing the strategy, this ministry has committed itself to the development of Blue Economy Bill, aiming to establish a modern, comprehensive and integrated legal framework to govern ocean-based activities. The bill will provide for a practical ocean-based economic model using green infrastructure and technologies, innovative financing mechanisms, and proactive institutional arrangements to meet the twin goals of protecting our oceans and coasts and enhancing their potential contribution to sustainable development.

A legal consultant, Ms. Judith Swan, has been recruited by the World Bank, who commenced the first phase, viz., in-depth research exercise and the auditing of existing laws and regulations governing blue economy related sectors in Mauritius, since December 2026. This phase aims to identify legislative gaps, overlaps, and areas requiring reform, and is expected to be completed by July 2026. The second phase, scheduled to conclude in October 2026, will involve the drafting and finalisation of the Bill.

**Mission Report****Mauritius Delegation at the Monaco Blue Initiative (MBI) and Blue Economy & Finance Forum (BEFF)****Monaco, 26–29 May 2026****Overview**

A Mauritian delegation led by Hon. Dr Arvin Boolell, Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, participated in the Monaco Explorations Indian Ocean Expedition Report Signature Ceremony, the Monaco Blue Initiative (MBI), and the Blue Economy & Finance Forum (BEFF). The events convened governments, scientists, financial institutions, investors, and international organizations to advance sustainable ocean governance, blue economy development, and innovative financing solutions.

**Key Outcomes****Monaco Explorations Indian Ocean Expedition**

Mauritius, Seychelles and Monaco endorsed the final report of the Mascarene Plateau scientific expedition. The report sets out 25 recommendations covering regional scientific cooperation, ecosystem-based management, marine spatial planning, ocean data sharing, environmental monitoring, and sustainable fisheries management. These findings provide an important scientific foundation for the Marine Spatial Plan of the Mauritius–Seychelles Joint Management Area (JMA).

**Monaco Blue Initiative (MBI)**

The Forum explored financing mechanisms to accelerate sustainable ocean development, including blue bonds, blue carbon and biodiversity credits, blended finance, debt-for-nature swaps, and ocean investment funds. Priority investment sectors identified were marine renewable energy, sustainable aquaculture, marine biotechnology, blue carbon initiatives, and sustainable maritime transport.

**Blue Economy & Finance Forum (BEFF)**

The Forum explored financing mechanisms to accelerate sustainable ocean development, including blue bonds, blue carbon and biodiversity credits, blended finance, debt-for-nature swaps, and ocean investment funds. Priority investment sectors identified were marine renewable energy, sustainable aquaculture, marine biotechnology, blue carbon initiatives, and sustainable maritime transport.

**Technical Unit**

The delegation visited Monaco's seawater-based heating and cooling facilities (thalassothermie), showcasing the potential of ocean thermal energy to support low-carbon urban development and enhance energy security.

**Strategic Opportunities for Mauritius**

The mission identified several opportunities to strengthen Mauritius' Blue Economy, notably:

- Marine renewable energy (SWAC, ocean thermal and wave energy);
- Blue carbon and biodiversity finance;
- Ocean observation and marine data infrastructure;
- Sustainable seaweed cultivation;
- Marine biotechnology;
- A dedicated Blue Economy Investment Platform; and
- Enhanced development of the Mauritius–Seychelles Joint Management Area.