

Challenges and opportunities for the ports of the Indian Ocean

Port Louis, Port of Mauritius

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The harbour, key to Mauritius competitive advantage

- Substantial investments over the last 10 years, where are we today?
 - Cruises
 - Bulk
 - Transshipment
 - Imports
 - Exports
 - Bunker supplies
- Wakashio, what impact for Mauritius port? Is surveillance of our coastal waters adequate?

Port Louis

- Infrastructure remains a problem, many days are lost due to bad weather (every year > 20days in Jan and Feb)
- Operations: I hear many operators complaining about delays due to operational issues
 - Cranes not operating
 - Port carriers not efficient
 - Sorting of containers taking delays
 - Procedures affecting availability of containers (mainly for large orders)
 - Increasing costs, longer delays
 - The negative impact of drug trade (apparently using Mauritius as a hub)

Major challenges

- Port efficiency is low
 - (around 50% according to World Bank Group analysis)
- MPA acts as landlord AND regulator
 - (is that conducive to investments and growth?)
- Financing of port development is unclear
- National Development Plan is outdated (2003)

Regional attractiveness

- Infrastructure in ports of the region
- Port traffic in the region
- A decrease in regional port connectivity to and from Mauritius
- A limited number of lines calling Mauritius
- Mauritius is isolated, its only chance to stand out is its attractiveness to the outside world
- Possible consequence of environmentalists movement (a green tax, how would we fare due to our distance to majors supplies and markets)

Concluding remark

- Port attractiveness is a consequence of economic activity.
 - How do we compare in 2021 compared to 2000 or 2010?
 - How do we compare to emerging ports/emerging regions?
- Can we measure our country's attractiveness as a regional player in monitoring , facilitating and enabling sea going traffic?
- It is time to measure with precise and mutually agreed performance criteria port efficiency and return on investment, similar arguments are proposed for many years, but what is the outcome.
- It is time to move from rhetoric to performance, we need to identify the stumbling blocks and promote enablers.