



**POLICY CENTER
FOR THE NEW SOUTH**



**THE ATLANTIC
DIALOGUES**

ATLANTIC CURRENTS

**The Wider Atlantic : Building
Interdependence and Solidarity
in a Fragmented World**

**11th Edition
December 2024**

**Under the supervision of
Mohammed Loulichki**

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The views expressed in Policy Center for the New South publications and commentary are the views of the author alone.

About Policy Center for the New South

The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aspiring to contribute to economic and social policies that provide answers to the collective challenges facing Morocco and the African continent, as integral parts of the global South. The PCNS advocates for an open, accountable, and enterprising "new South" that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and the South Atlantic basins, embodied by a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analytical work and focus on dialogue and partnerships from different perspectives and disciplines, the think tank aims to cultivate African expertise and excellence.

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11th EDITION

**THE WIDER ATLANTIC:
BUILDING INTERDEPENDENCE
AND SOLIDARITY IN A
FRAGMENTED WORLD**

**ATLANTIC
CURRENTS**

**AN ANNUAL REPORT ON WIDER ATLANTIC
PERSPECTIVES AND PATTERNS**

DECEMBER 2024

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FOREWORD



In today's divided and fragmented world, marked by protracted conflicts, competing interests, and deep socio-economic inequalities, the multidimensional and even existential challenges that confront nations and communities—in both the Global North and South—cannot be addressed effectively through traditional approaches or conventional remedies. The scale and complexity of these issues, particularly for developing countries, demand a fundamental shift in how we understand global dynamics.

Reformed, inclusive, and effective institutions are needed urgently to address critical issues including peace and security, development, climate change, poverty, and the ethical use of emerging technologies. The September 2024 Summit of the Future provided an opportunity for United Nations member states to revive the spirit and essence of multilateralism and to renew their commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), supported by actionable measures, including financing for development and advancing the energy transition. However, the outcome of the COP29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, fell short of meeting the legitimate expectations of developing countries, which bear the greatest impacts of the changing climate. Such an outcome offers little hope of achieving the desired result at the Financing for Development Conference in 2025.

Reform of global political and financial institutions is a slow process. In the meantime, it is essential to explore innovative pathways and new policy frameworks to build an alternative consensus, fostering cooperation around shared opportunities and values in a spirit of collaboration and solidarity.

The Atlantic Ocean, as a conflict-free zone, provides an ideal setting to transform these commitments into concrete actions and to test innovative approaches and a new paradigm of partnership between the Global North and South, while reinforcing South-South cooperation. This vision is at the center of the Royal Initiative to extend the African Atlantic Community's dynamics to the Sahel countries, together with a gas pipeline project between Morocco and Nigeria. The aim of this is not only to stimulate greater African integration but also to create synergy between existing mechanisms of regional and continental integration in Africa. The process it has initiated is built on three strategic pillars: political and security dialogue, promotion of the blue economy and maritime connectivity, and support for sustainable development through conservation of the marine environment.

Atlantic Africa, spanning from Tangier to Cape Town, accounts for 45.1% of the African population, 50.3% of the continent's GDP and 54.7% of its total

trade. The region is endowed with abundant natural resources, including oil, natural gas, minerals, and rich fish stocks, alongside significant potential for wind and solar energy. However, its socio-economic development continues to be constrained by security challenges, limited industrialization, and rivalry between external powers. The two groundbreaking initiatives launched last year by Morocco and the United States provide a promising foundation for strengthening cooperation and building a new model of partnership between the North and South of the Atlantic. The Royal Initiative is a significant contribution to the Royal vision of a unified, integrated and autonomous Africa.

The 25 contributions in the this edition of *Atlantic Currents*, authored by senior analysts and researchers from across the four continents bordering the Atlantic, explores the geopolitics and geoeconomics of this Initiative and identifies the necessary ingredients to maximize its impact on Atlantic Africa and Africa more broadly. These insights provide fresh analysis and offer lessons learned from similar cases of integration, which could give birth to an Atlantic Community.

All contributors acknowledge the potential of the wider Atlantic to inspire a new and dynamic model of cooperation, covering South and North. Special emphasis is placed on migration, highlighting the need to move beyond irrational fears and to adopt a constructive narrative. This implies promoting a fair and effective system of labor migration that addresses the needs of both sending and receiving states, notably in Europe and Africa. In this context, the concept of return migration is gaining increasing appeal among the African diaspora. However, realizing this potential requires a genuine commitment from policymakers to create an environment conducive to encouraging African talent to return and stay. This could help reverse the brain drain that undermines Africa's development and make it into a 'brain gain' for the whole continent.

Another relevant issue that receives particular attention is food security. This affects primarily African countries. Given global demographic trends, it is suggested that a technological exchange between African farmers and their Latin American counterparts could help Africa achieve self-sufficiency and transit from importing to exporting food.

Maritime security in the Atlantic is a crucial challenge for African countries. They must combat with limited means increasing acts of piracy, drug trafficking, human smuggling, and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. In the absence of an inclusive body with a comprehensive

mandate, similar to that of the Indian Ocean Association, the existing regional agreements remain limited in scope and enforcement authority.

Finally, on energy supply and the energy transition, the Atlantic region boasts abundant energy potential, capable of meeting the future electricity demands of African countries while serving as a catalyst for the continent's industrialization, development, and integration.

This list is illustrative of the many advantages that make the Atlantic Ocean an ideal platform for exploring innovative forms of cooperation that can bridge the divide between developed and developing countries, and transcend national cultural differences. What is most important is to start building the foundation for a transcontinental relationship rooted in mutual interest and respect, genuine collaboration, and a shared vision of an interdependent future. This ambition continues to guide the Policy Center for the New South in its advocacy of an inclusive and interdependent Atlantic.

Over the past decade, the Center has emerged as a credible voice in shaping discussions on the wider Atlantic, guided by Royal directives on Atlantic Africa and supported by the Royal Patronage of the Atlantic Dialogues. Through key initiatives such as the Atlantic Dialogues—now in its 13th year—and over 70 conferences on Atlantic issues, the Center has fostered a network of 2,500 influential figures and nearly 500 young Atlantic leaders. Backed by diverse institutional partnerships across four continents and a robust output of over 50 research publications, including 20 books and reports, PCNS has developed significant analytical expertise. These efforts highlight the Center's pivotal role in redefining transatlantic relations, championing Morocco's vision, and advancing the concept of an enlarged Atlantic, inclusive of its South.

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Executive President
Policy Center for the New
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SECTION

1



THE POTENTIAL OF THE AFRO-ATLANTIC SPACE

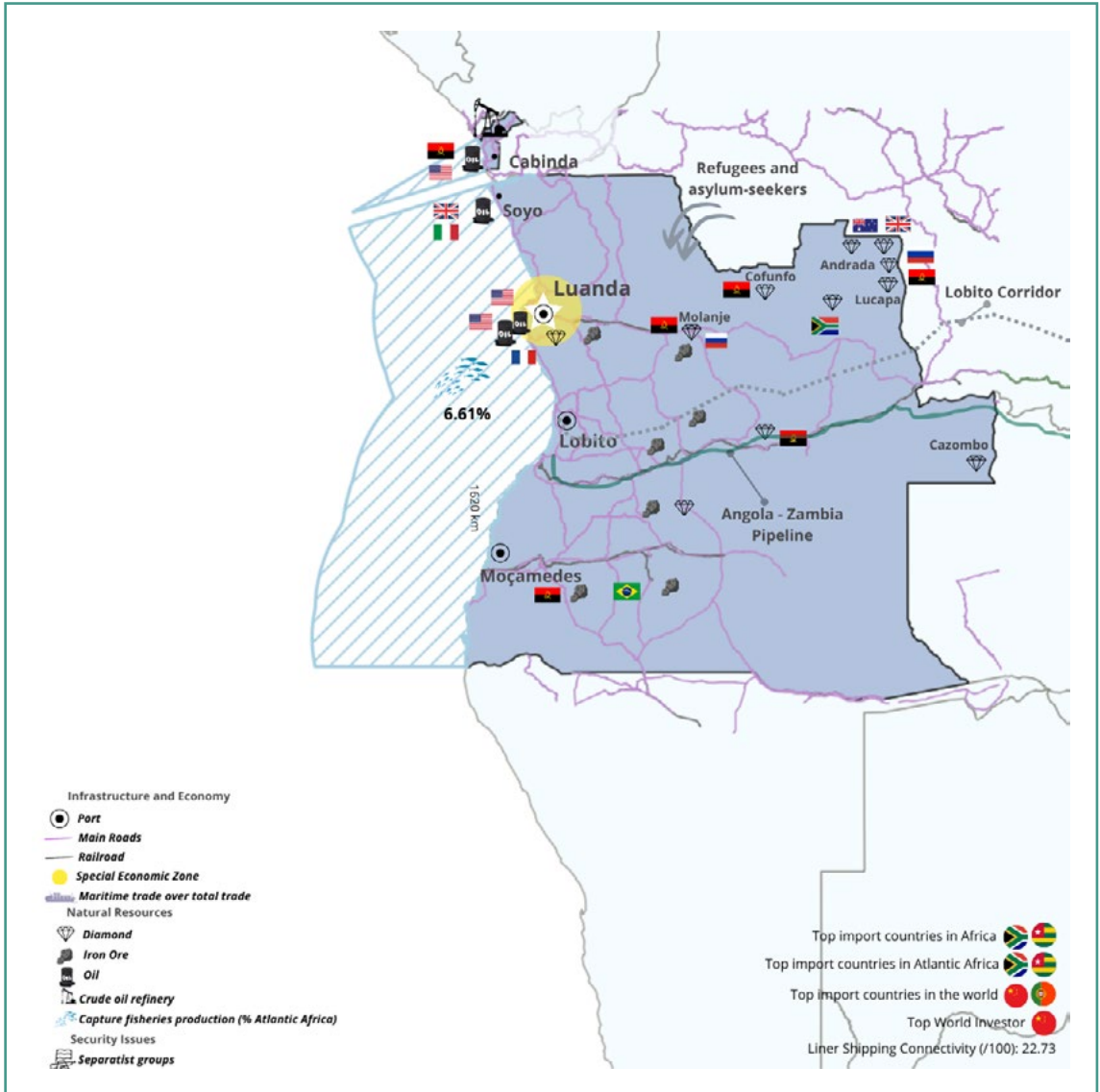


OVERVIEW OF THE AFRO-ATLANTIC COUNTRIES

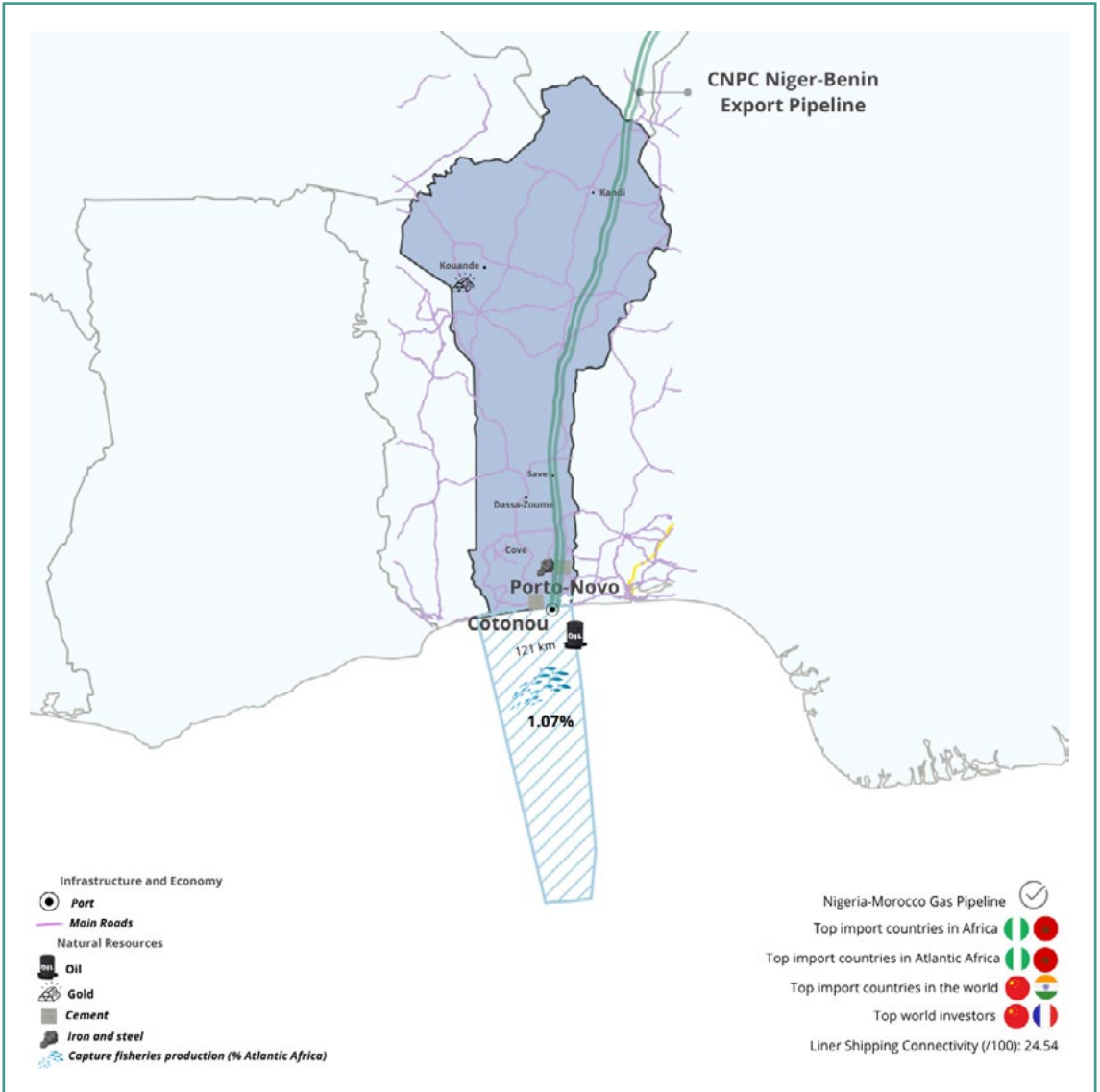
The maps in this report were created using data from Marine Regions,
© Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ).



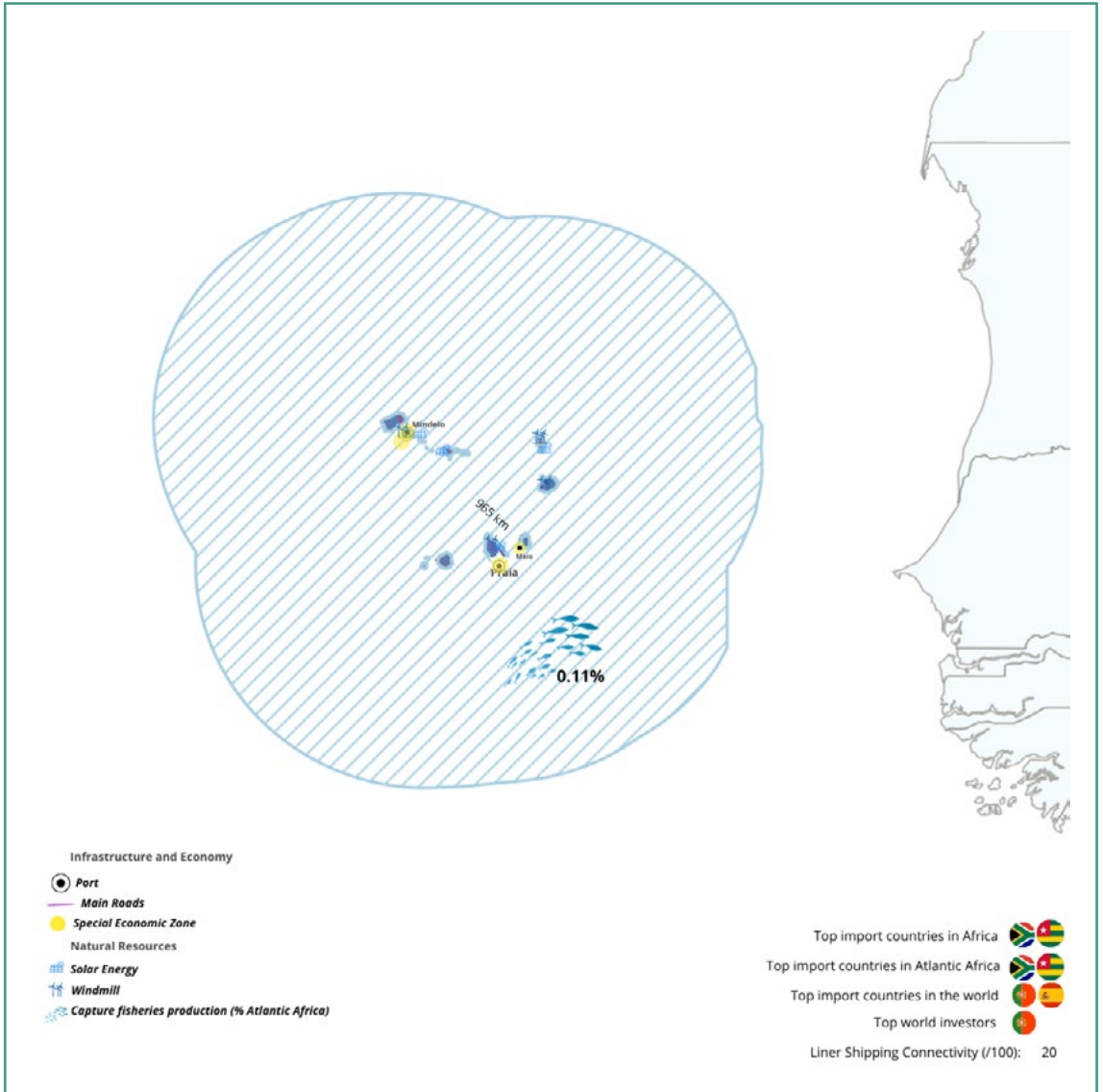
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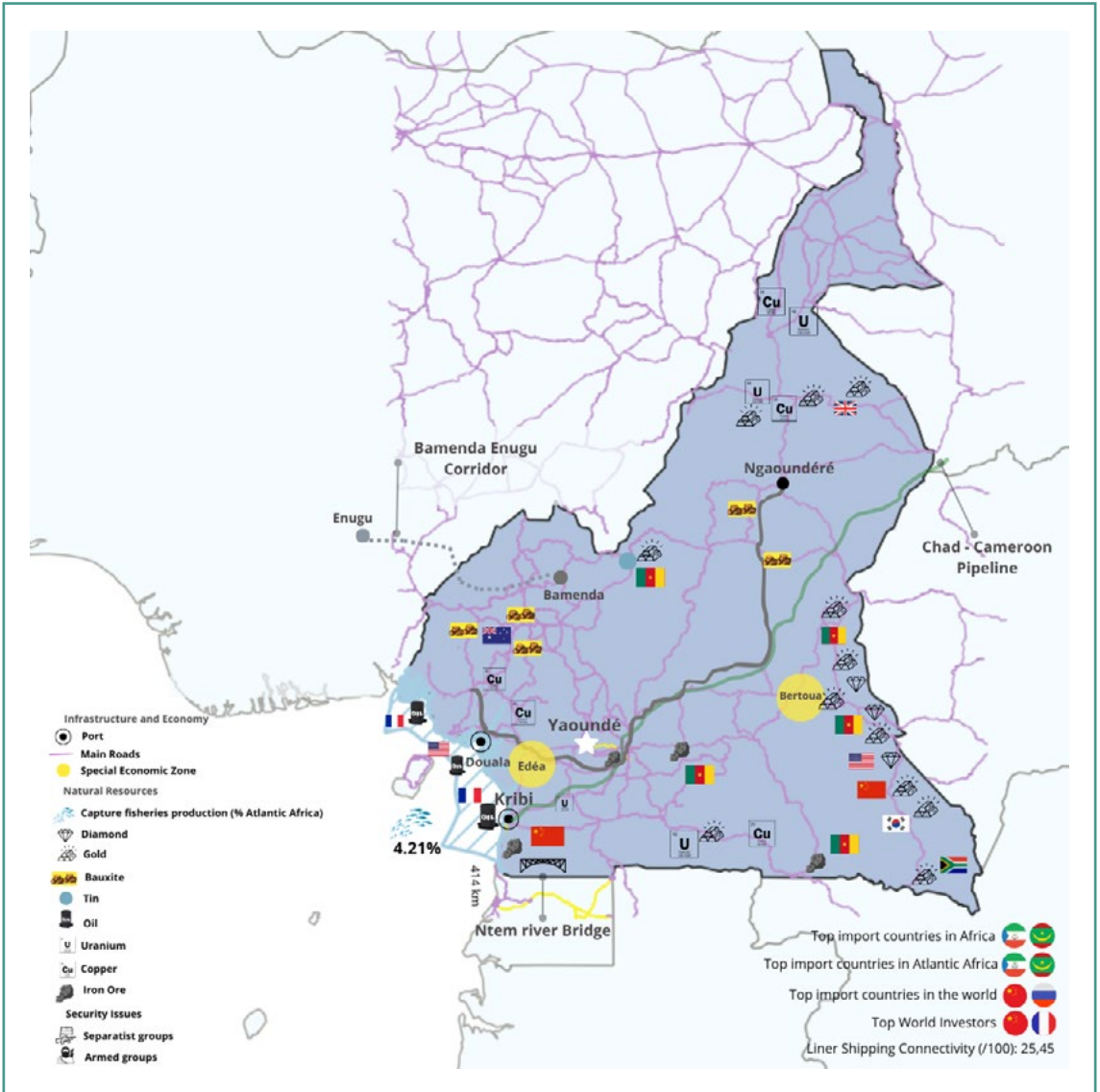
Benin



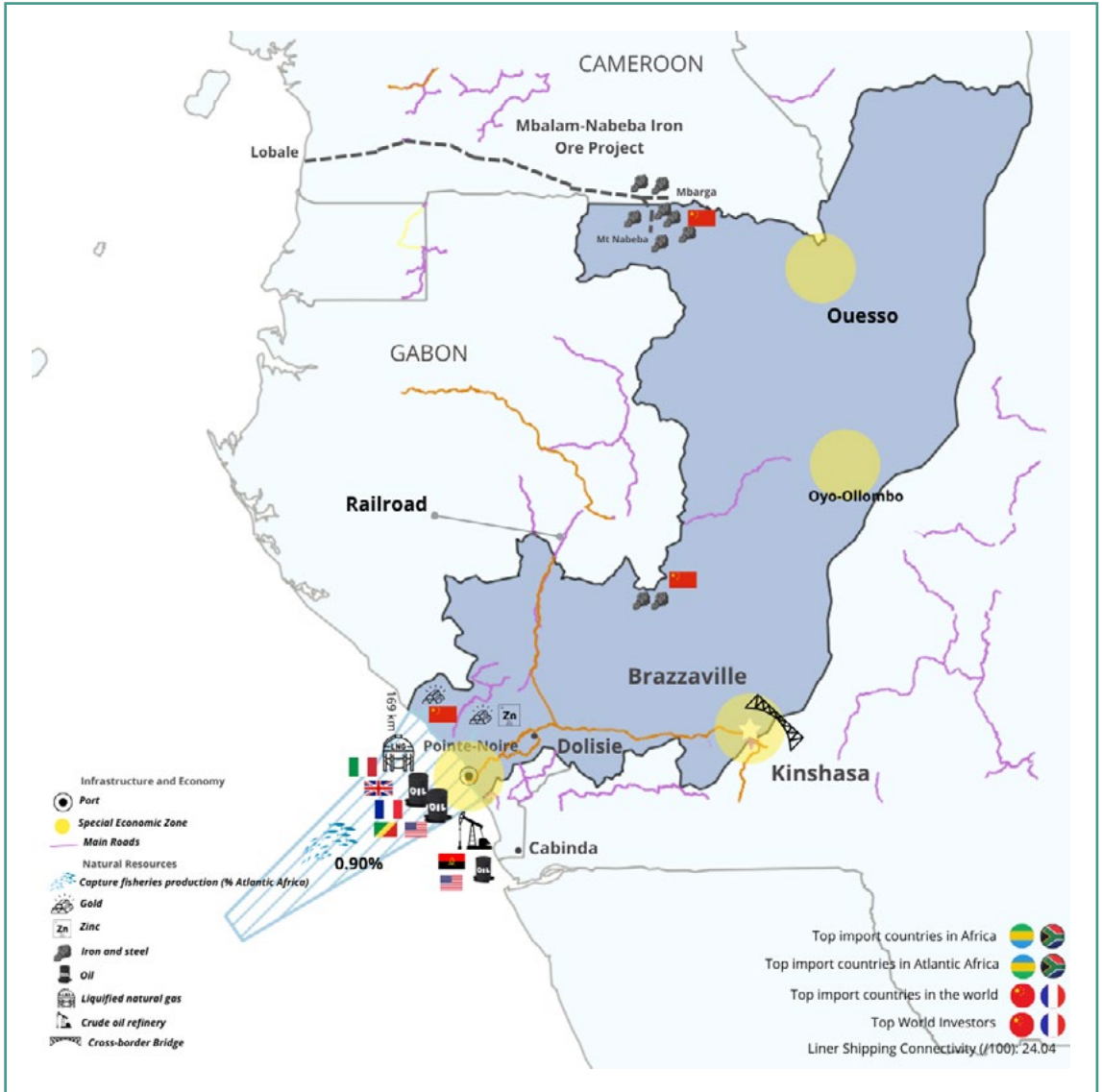
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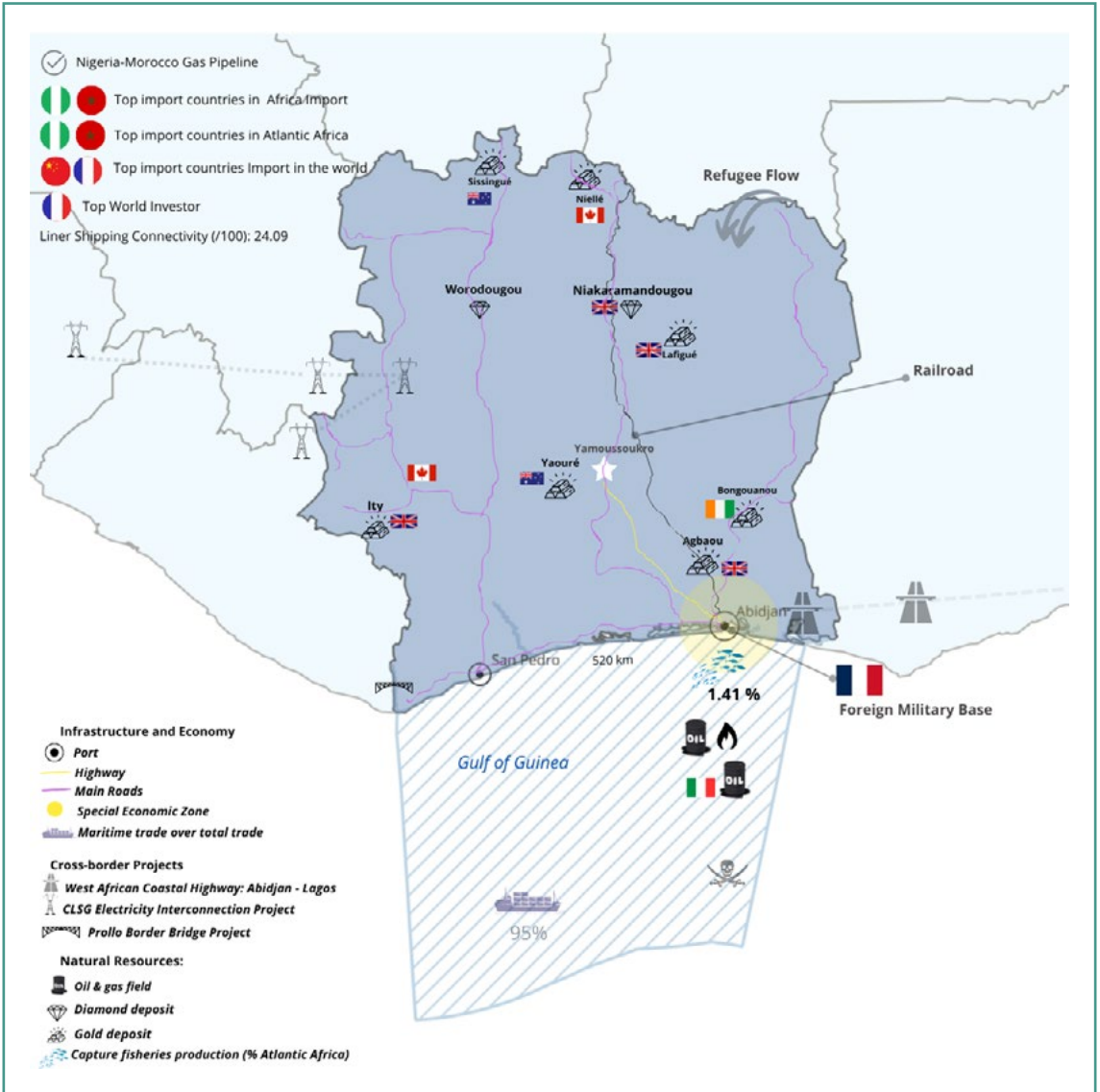
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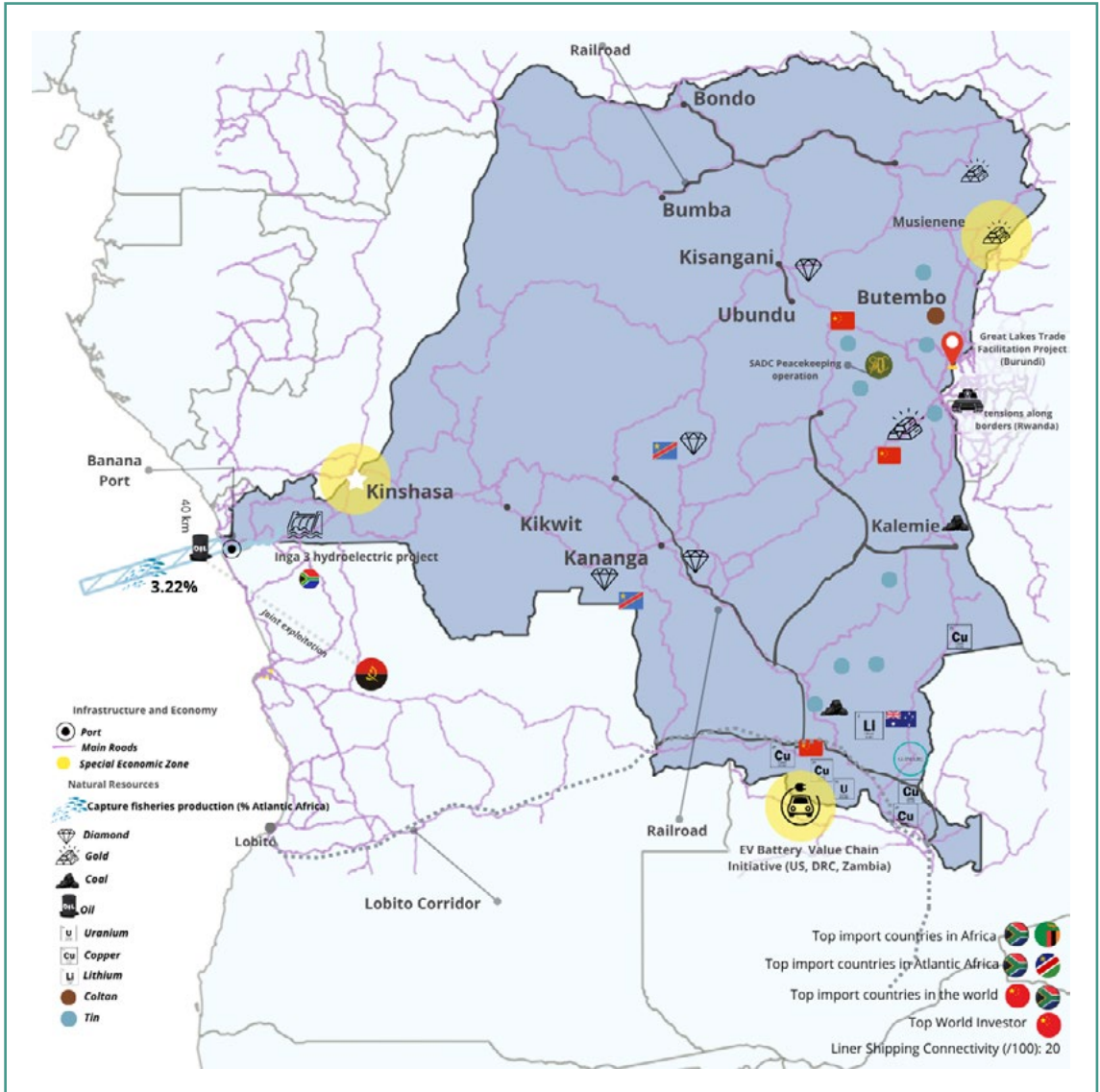
Congo



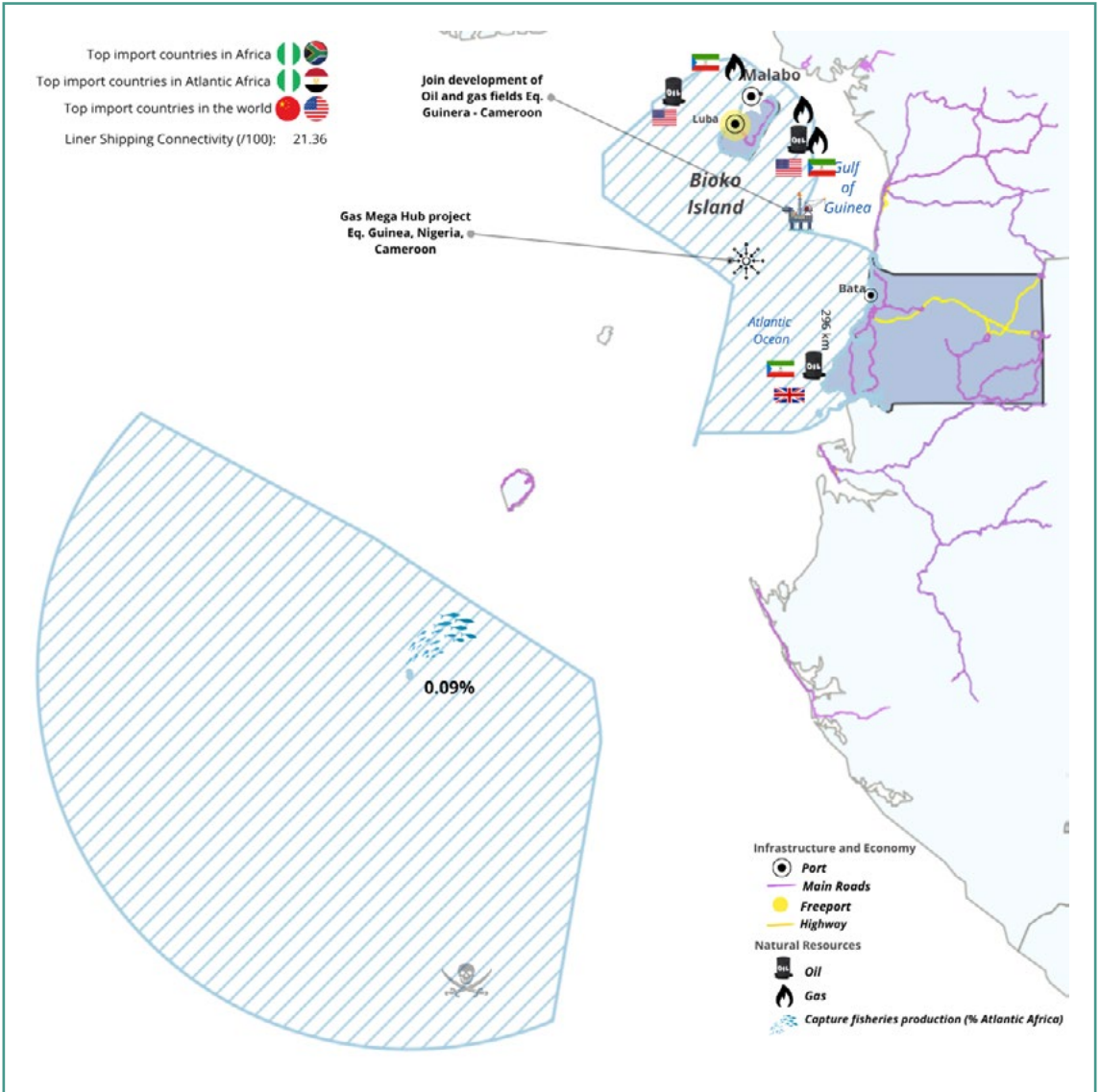
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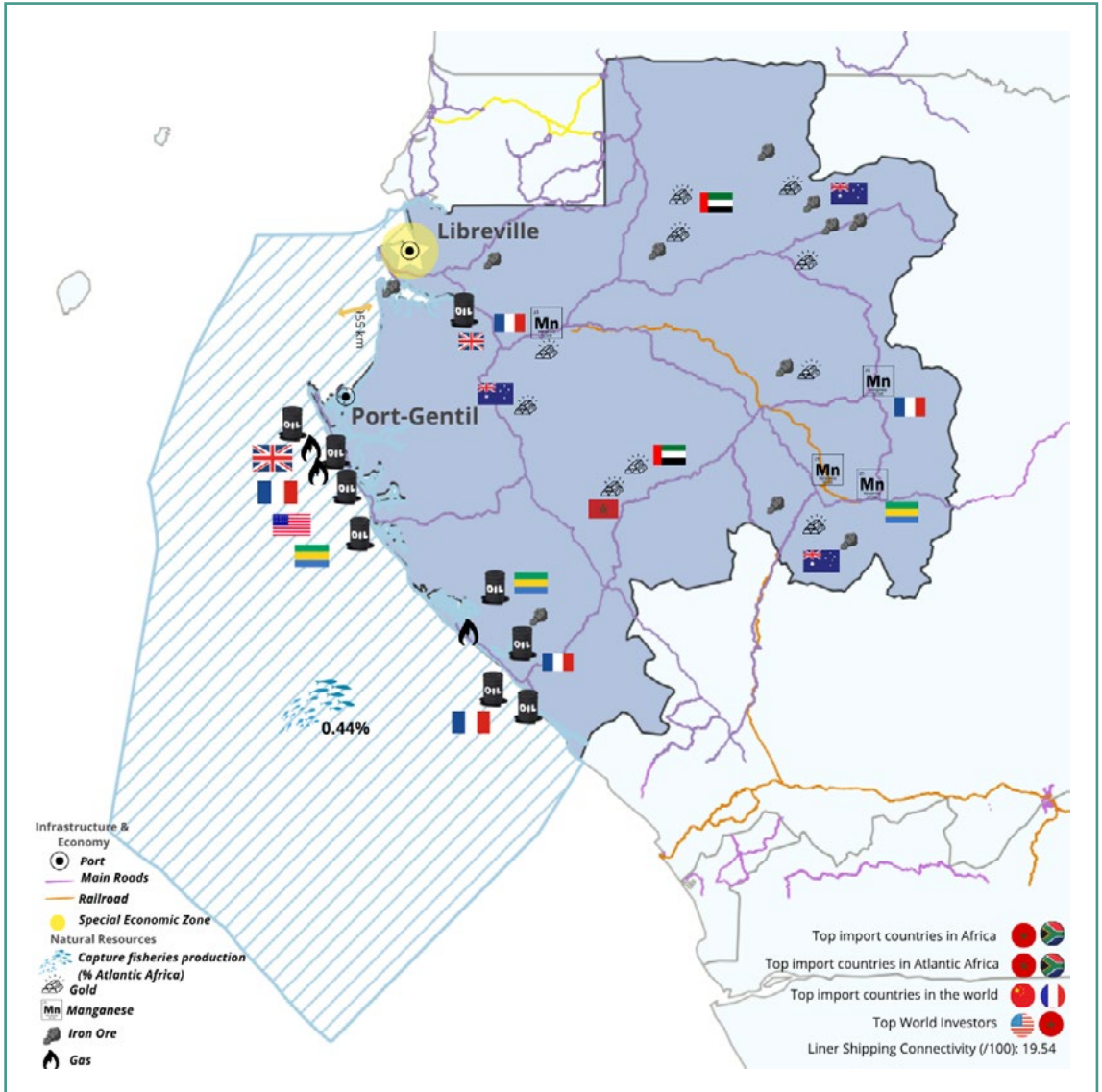
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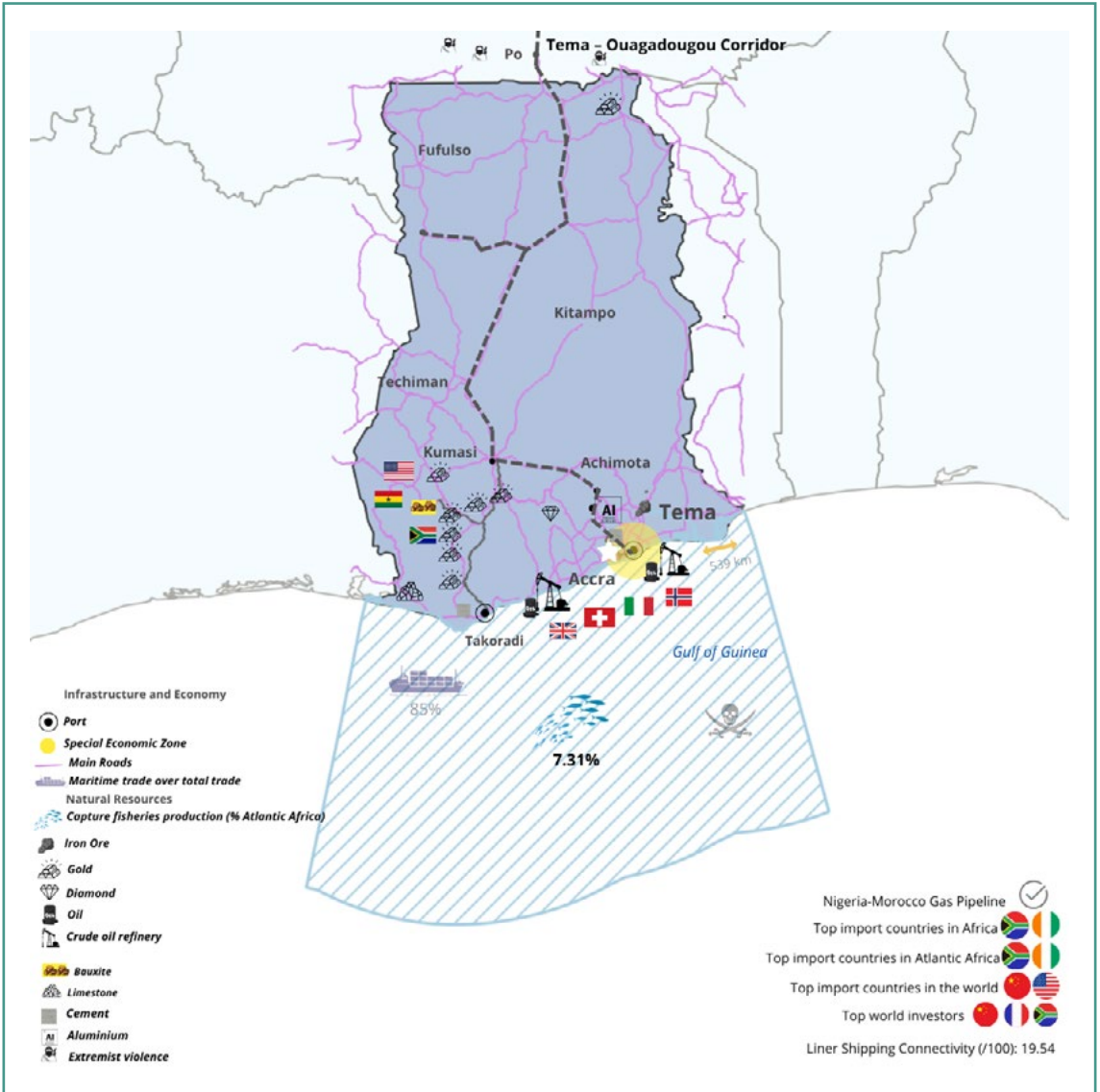
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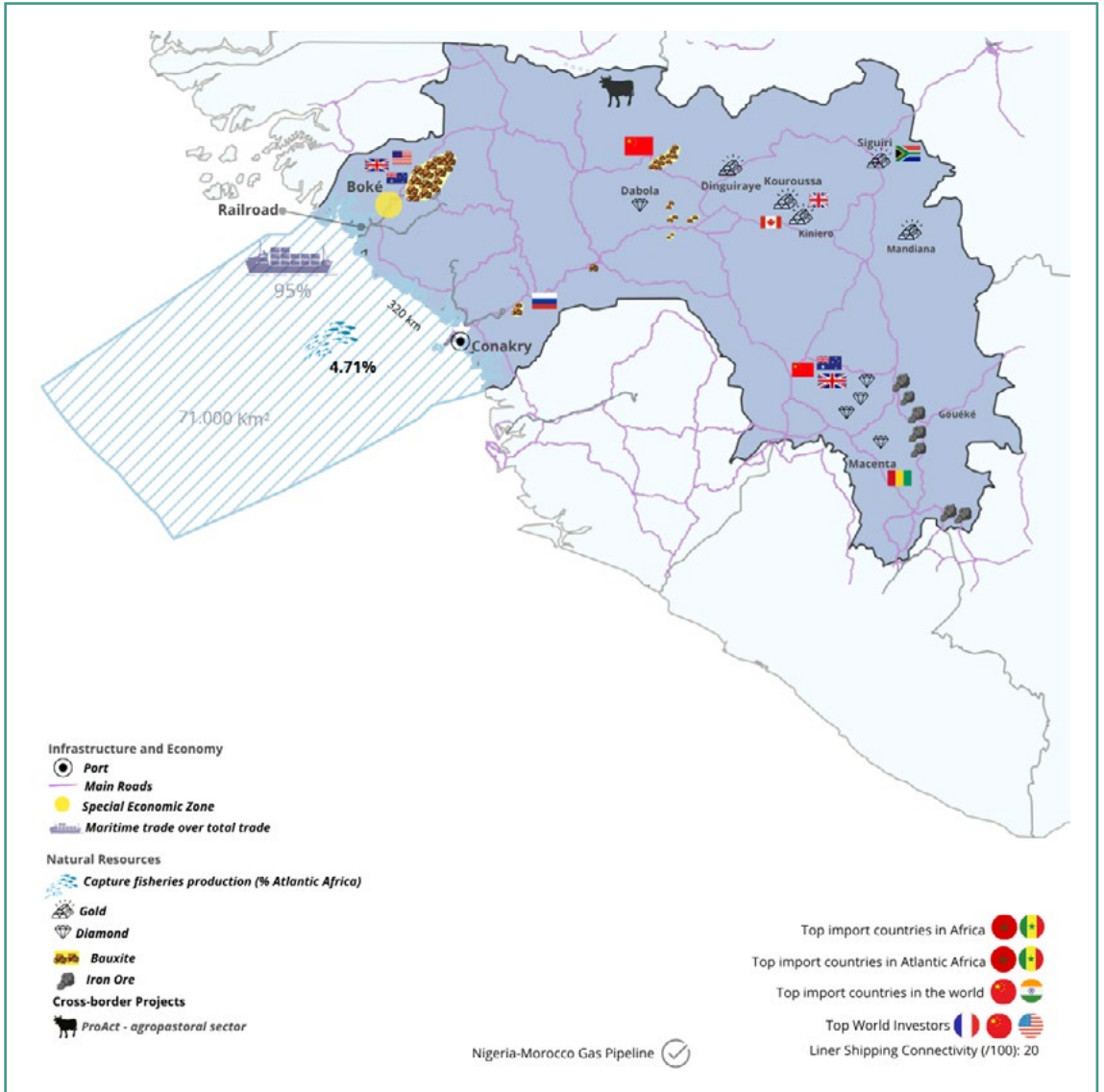
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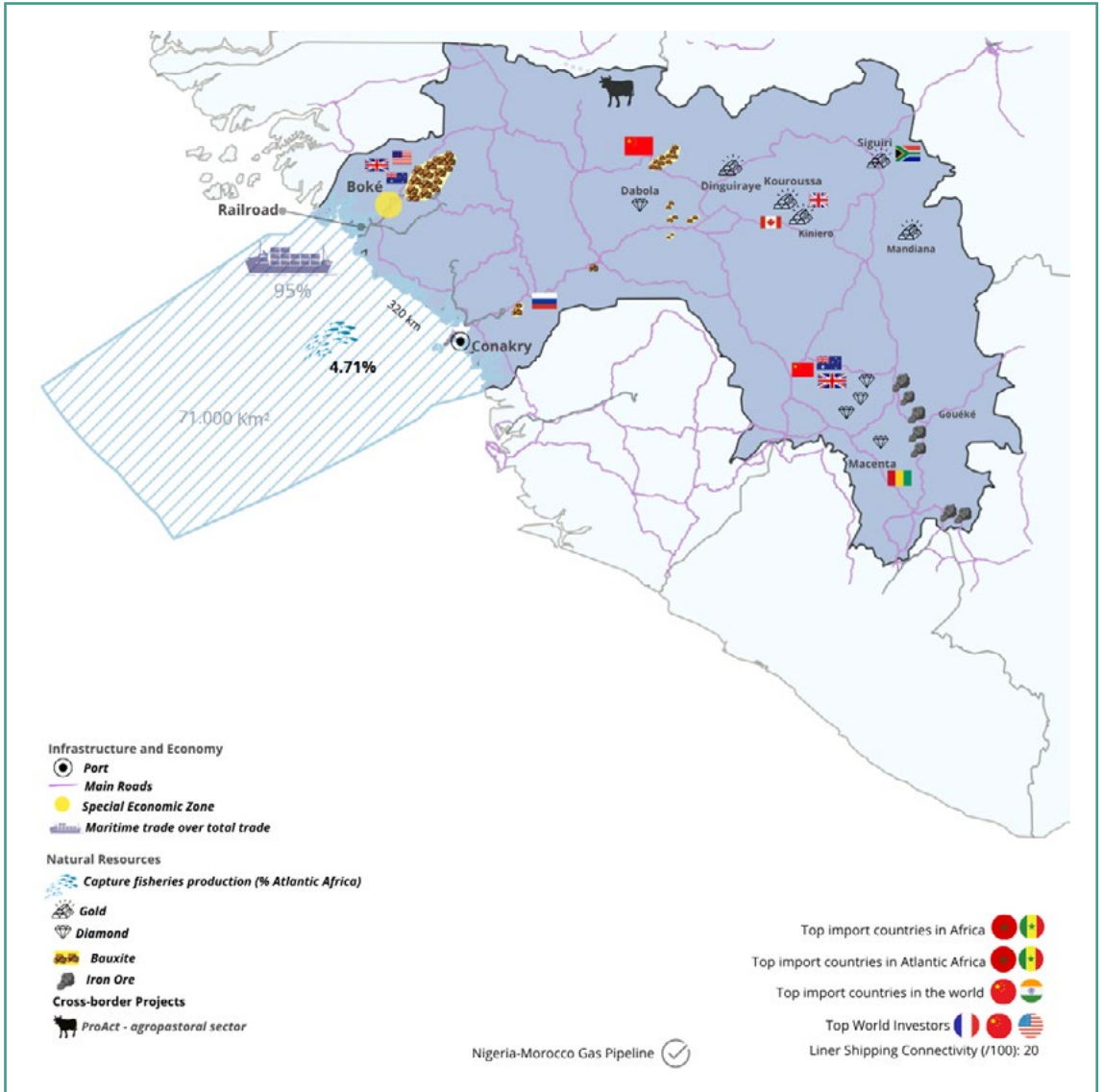
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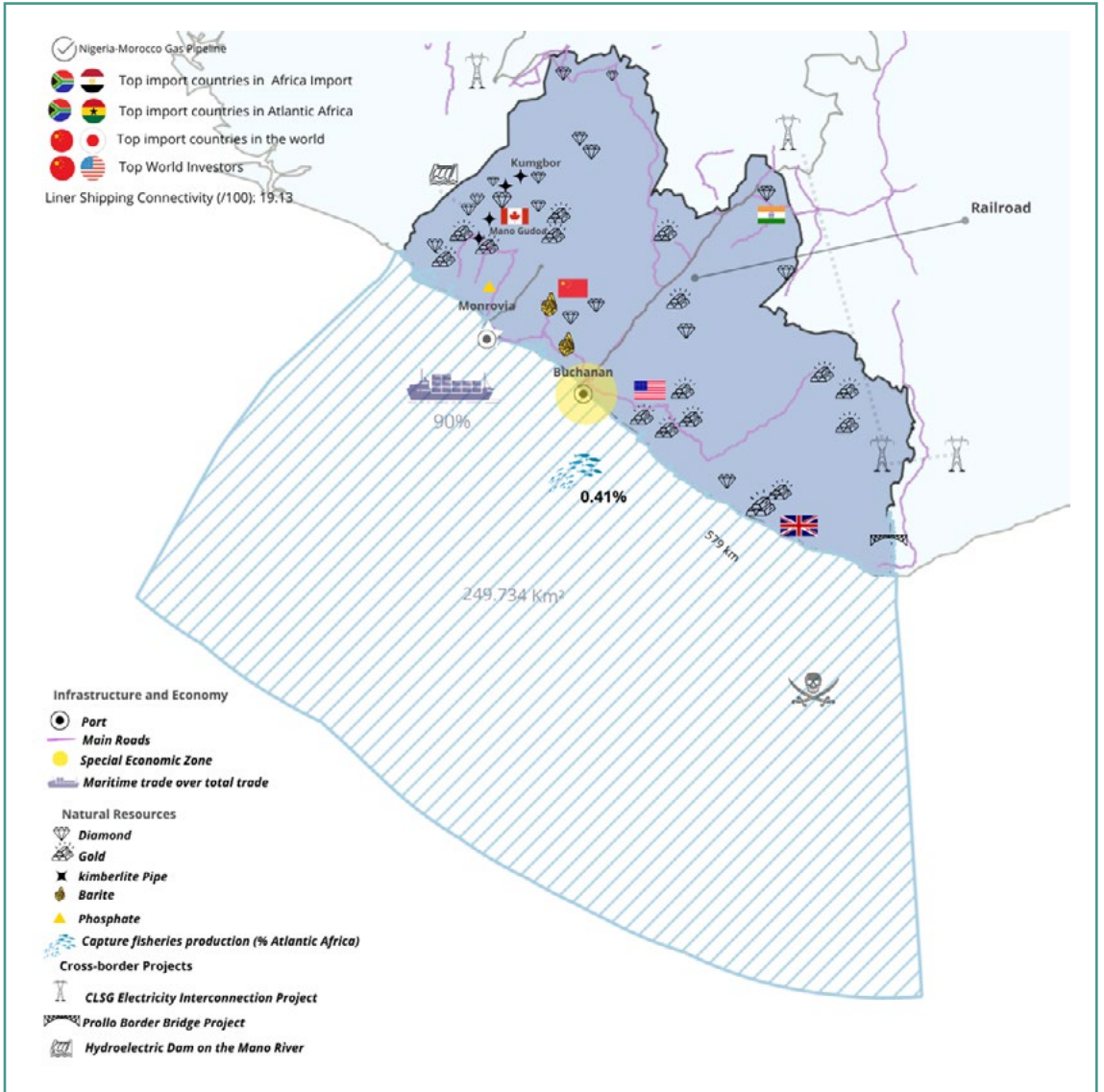
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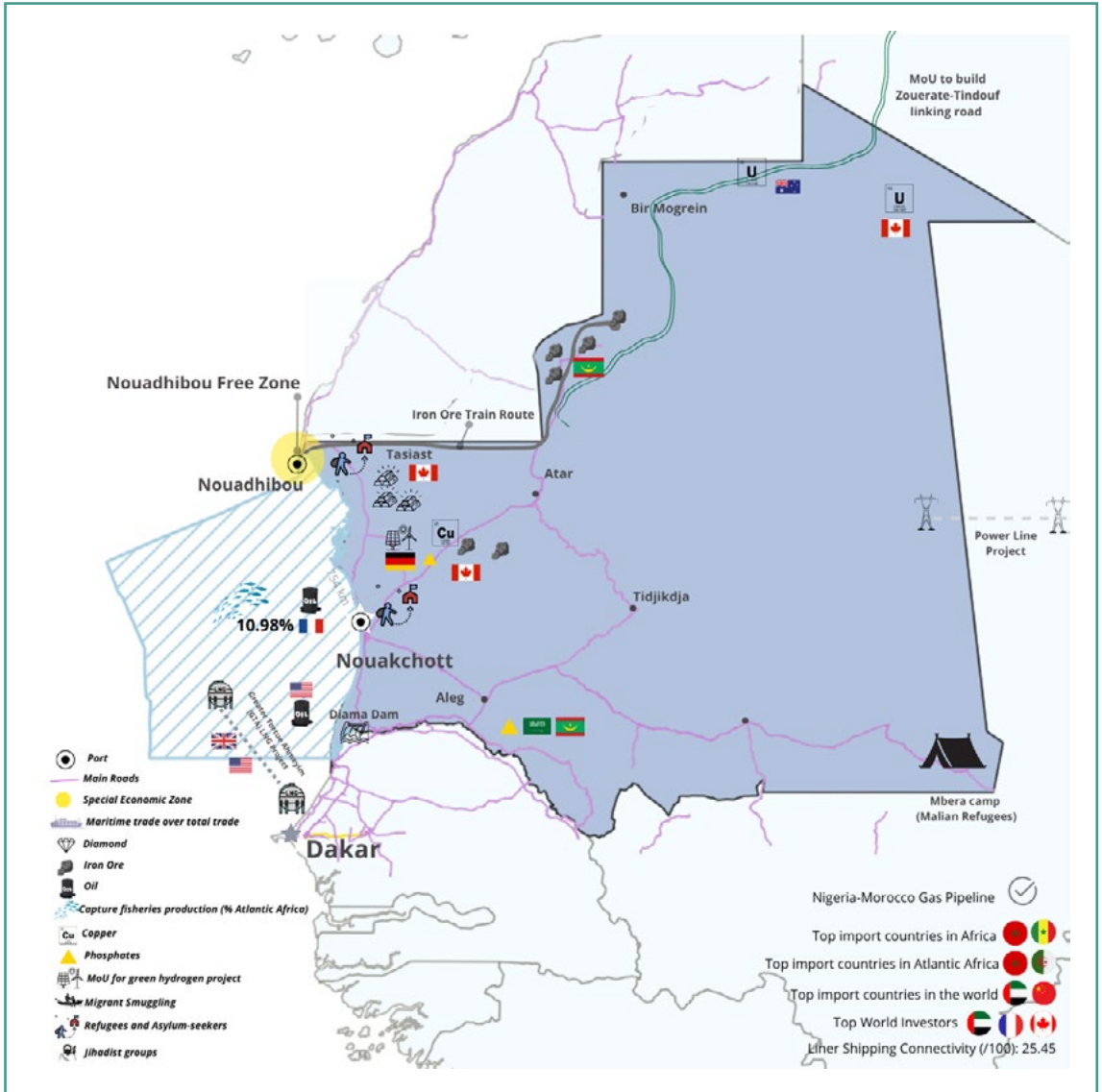
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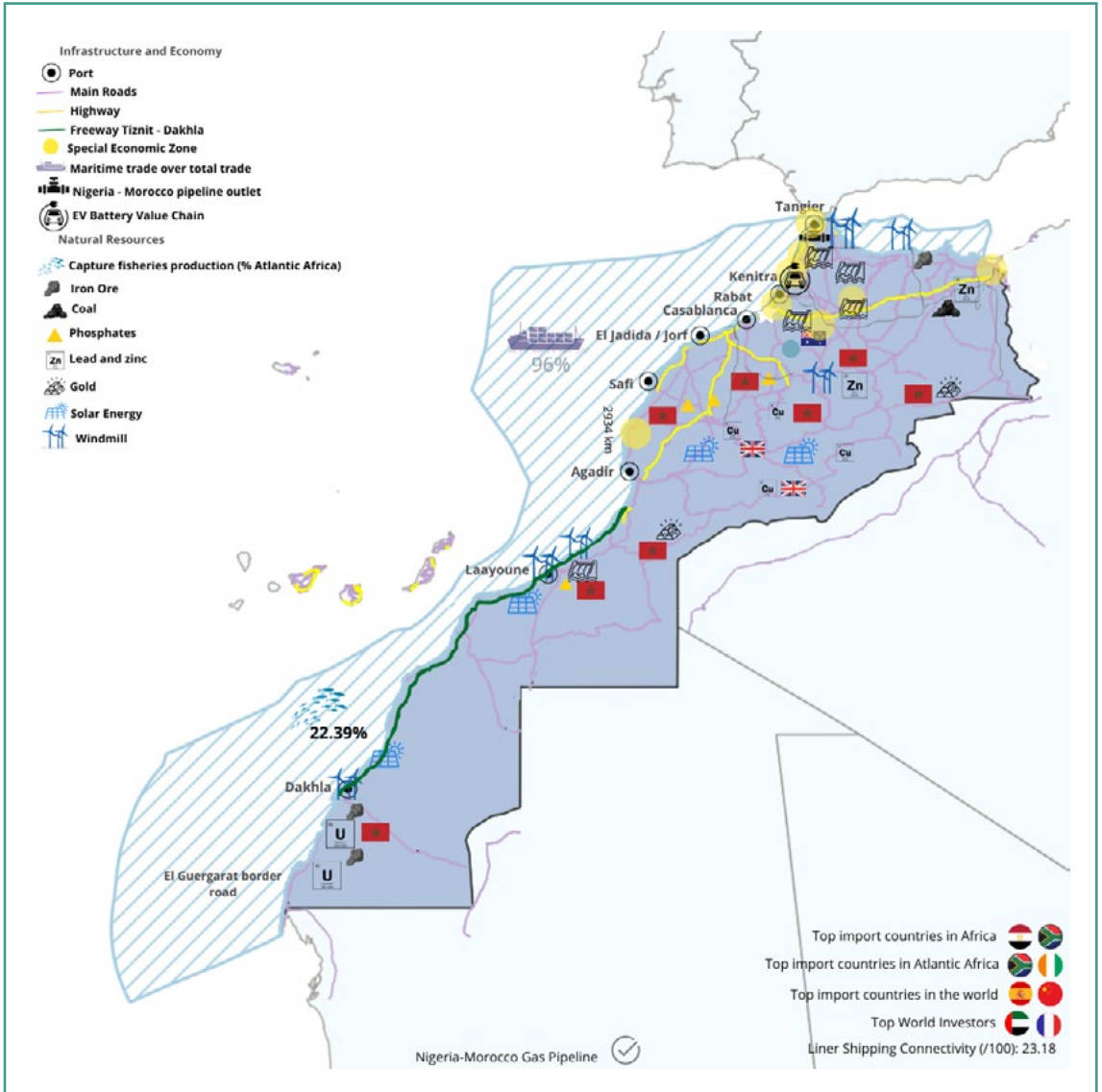
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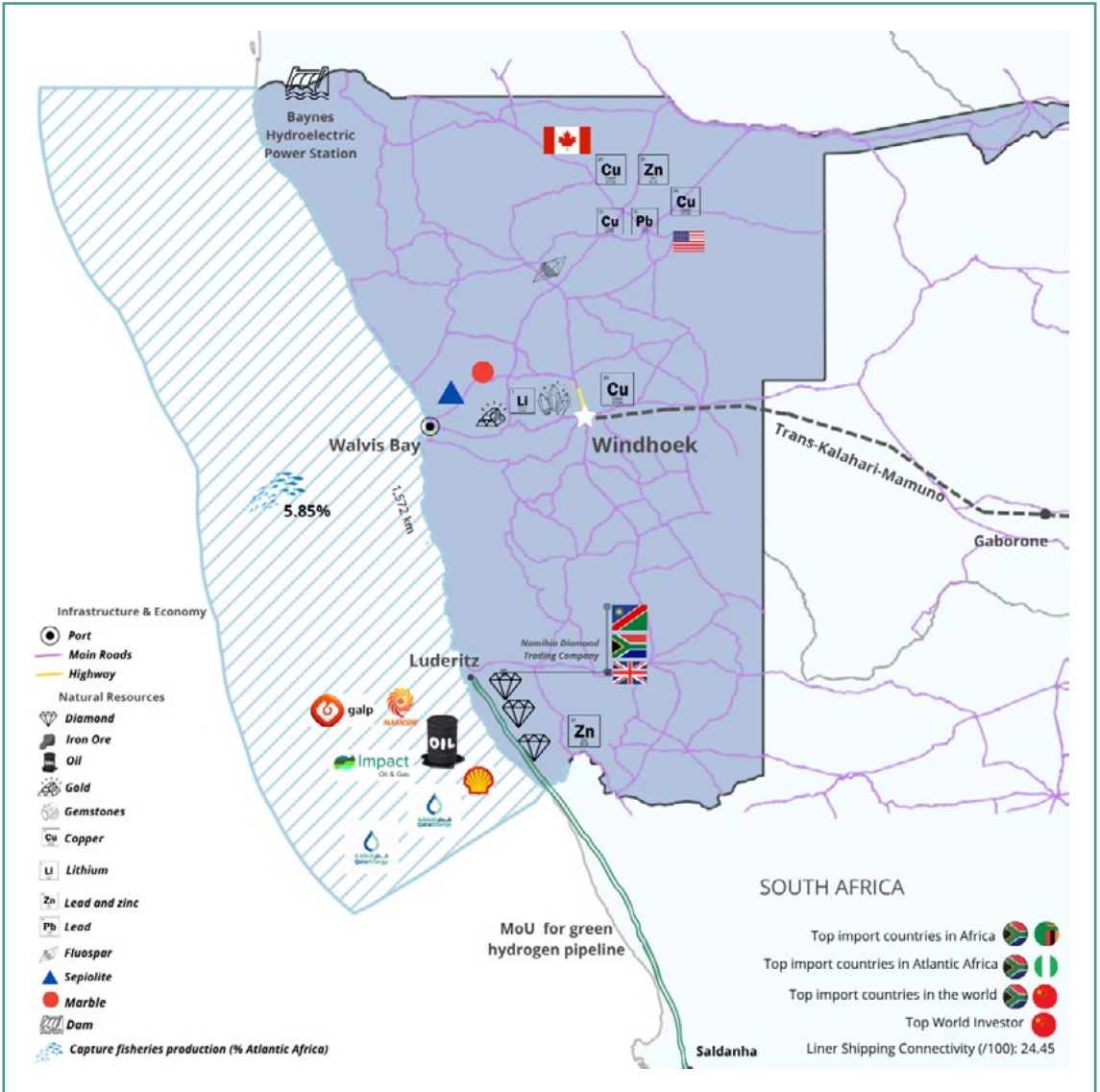
Mauritania



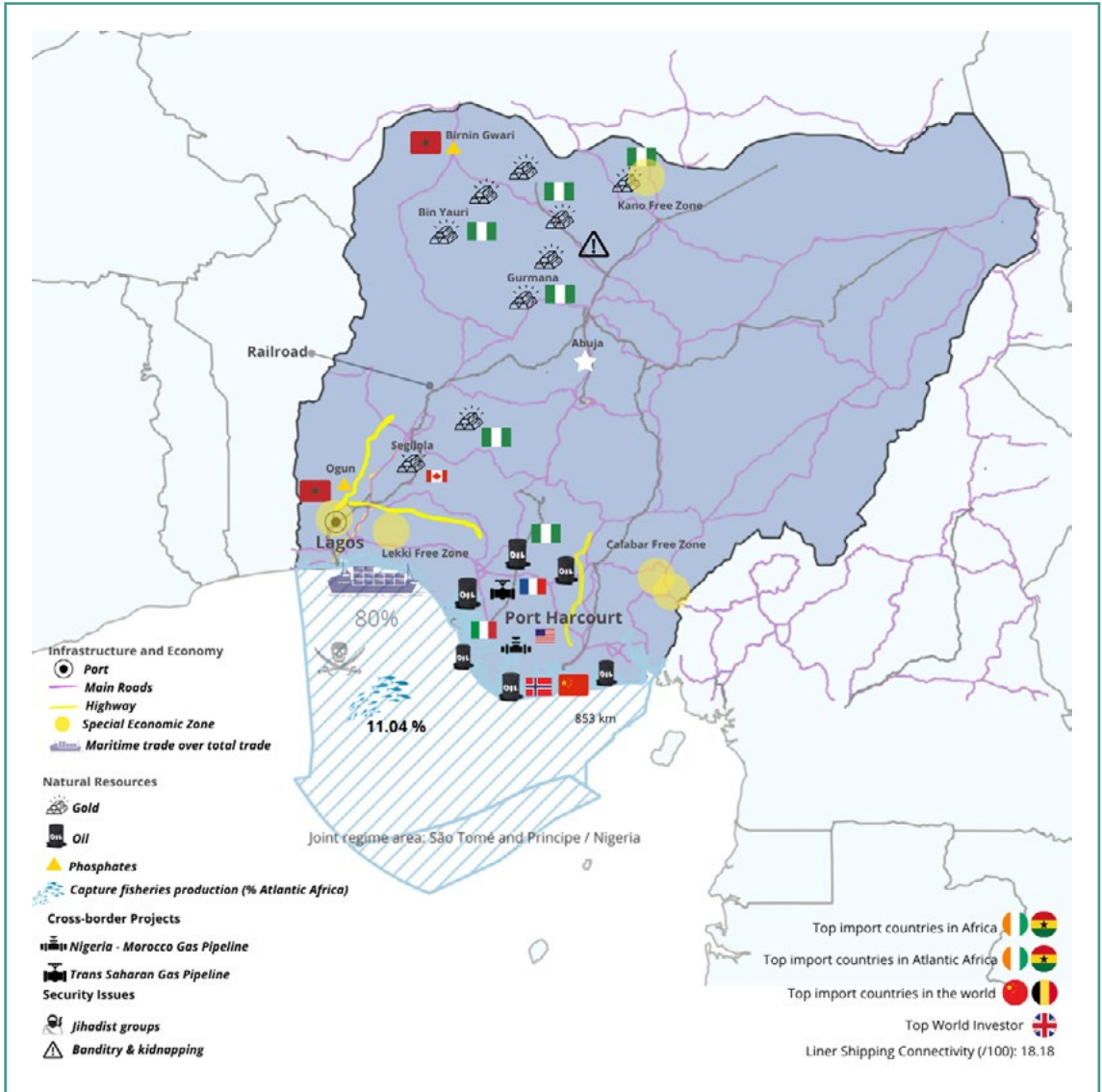
Morocco



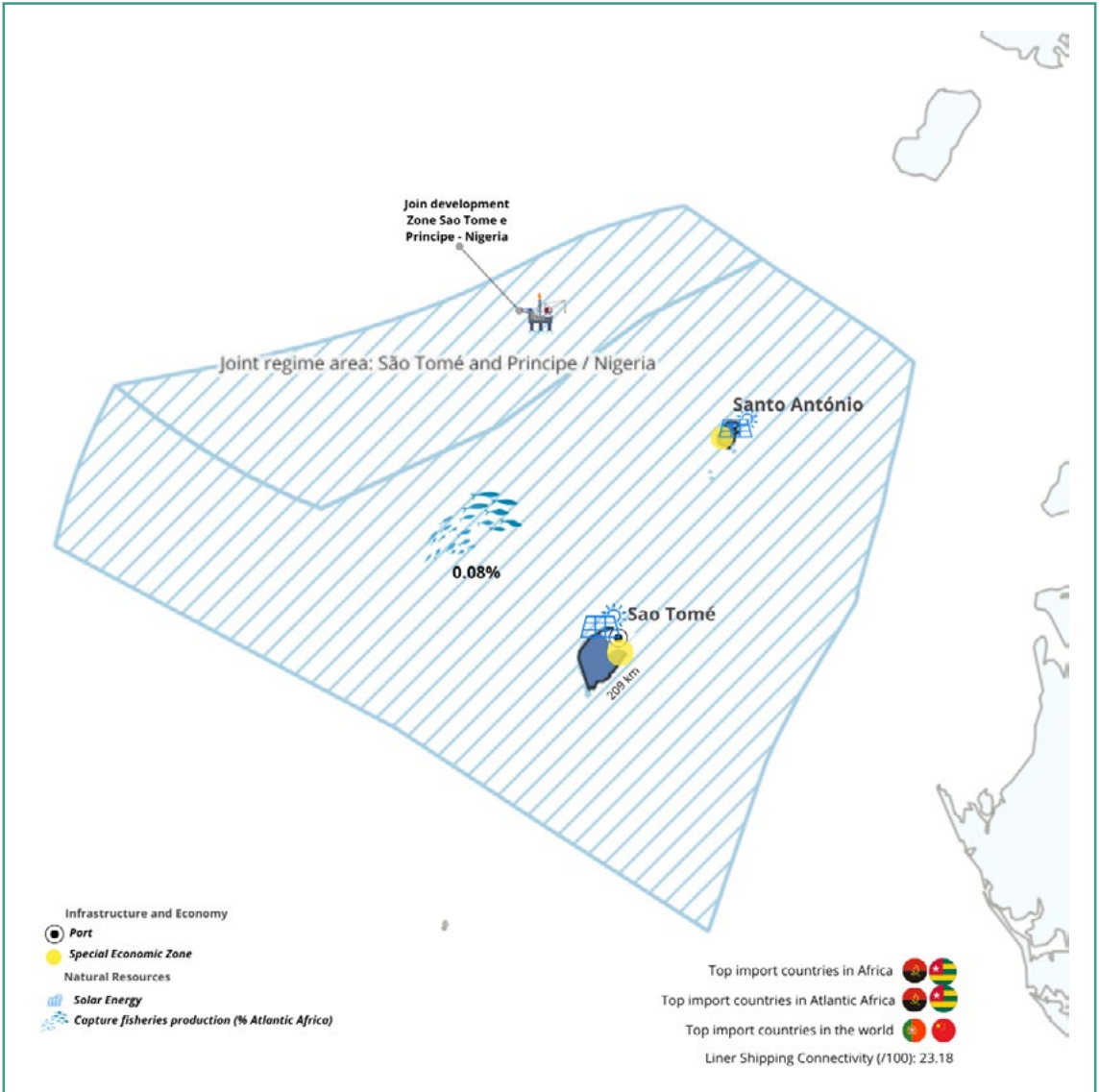
Namibia



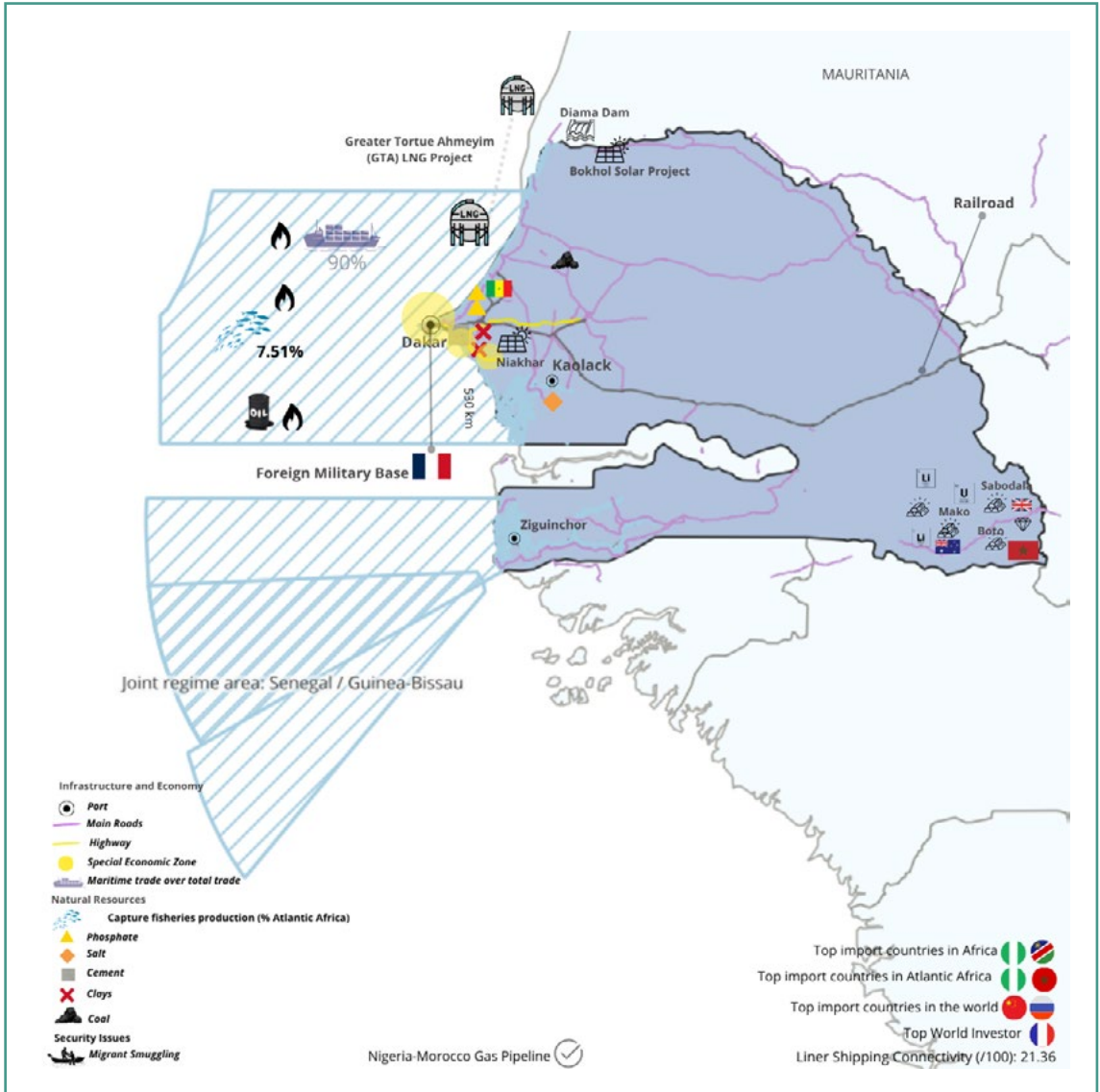
Nigeria



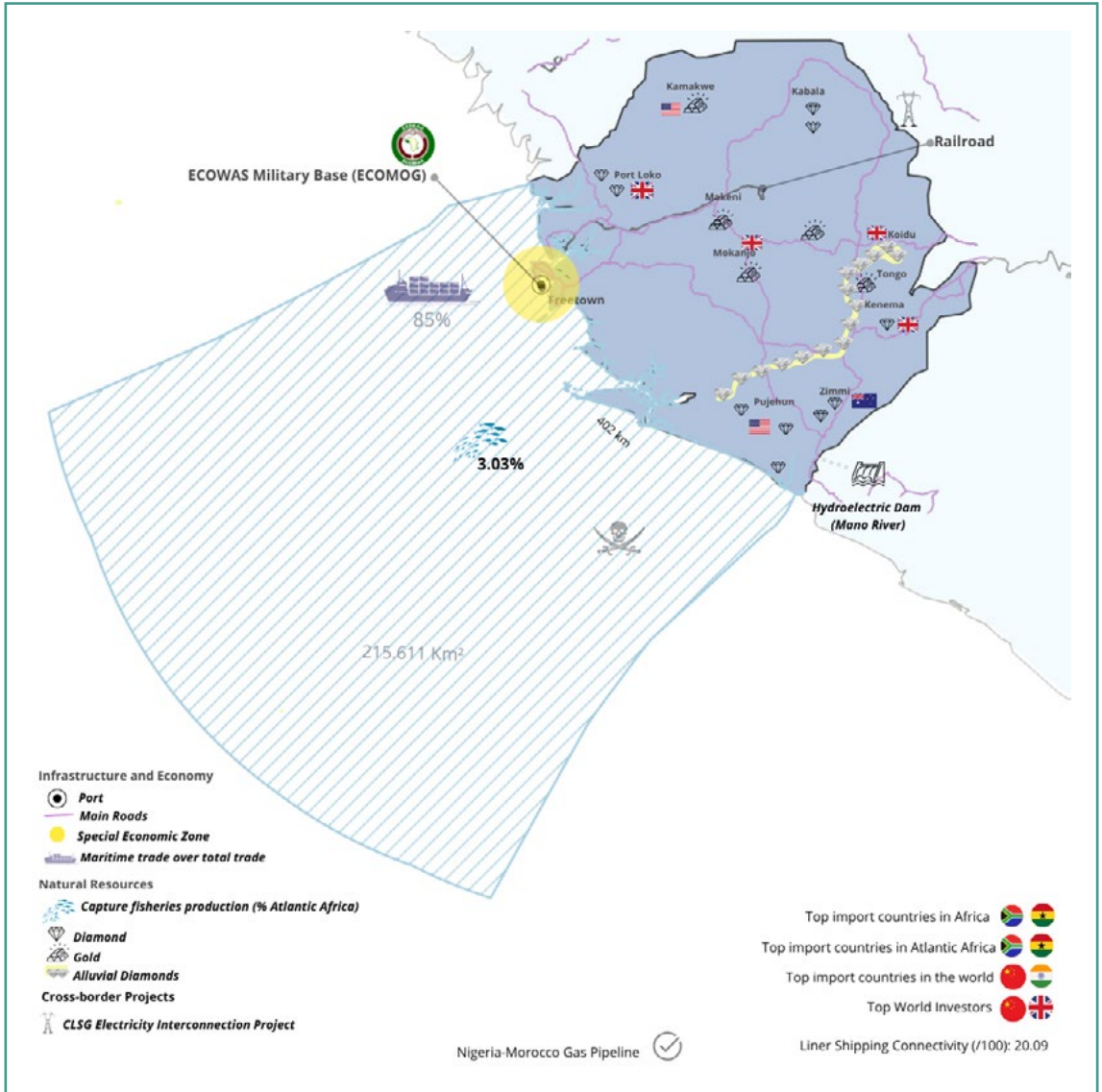
São Tomé and Príncipe



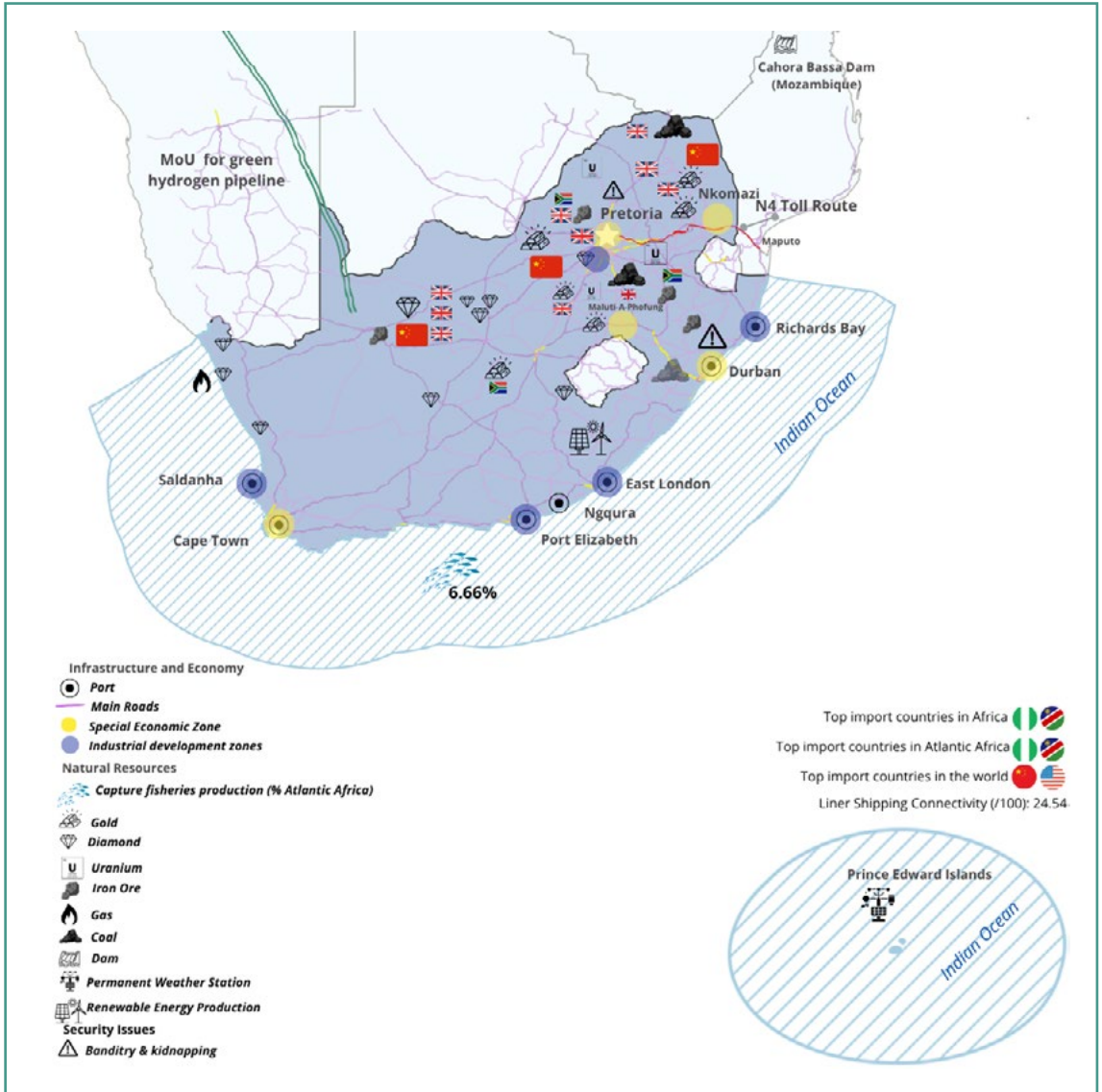
Senegal



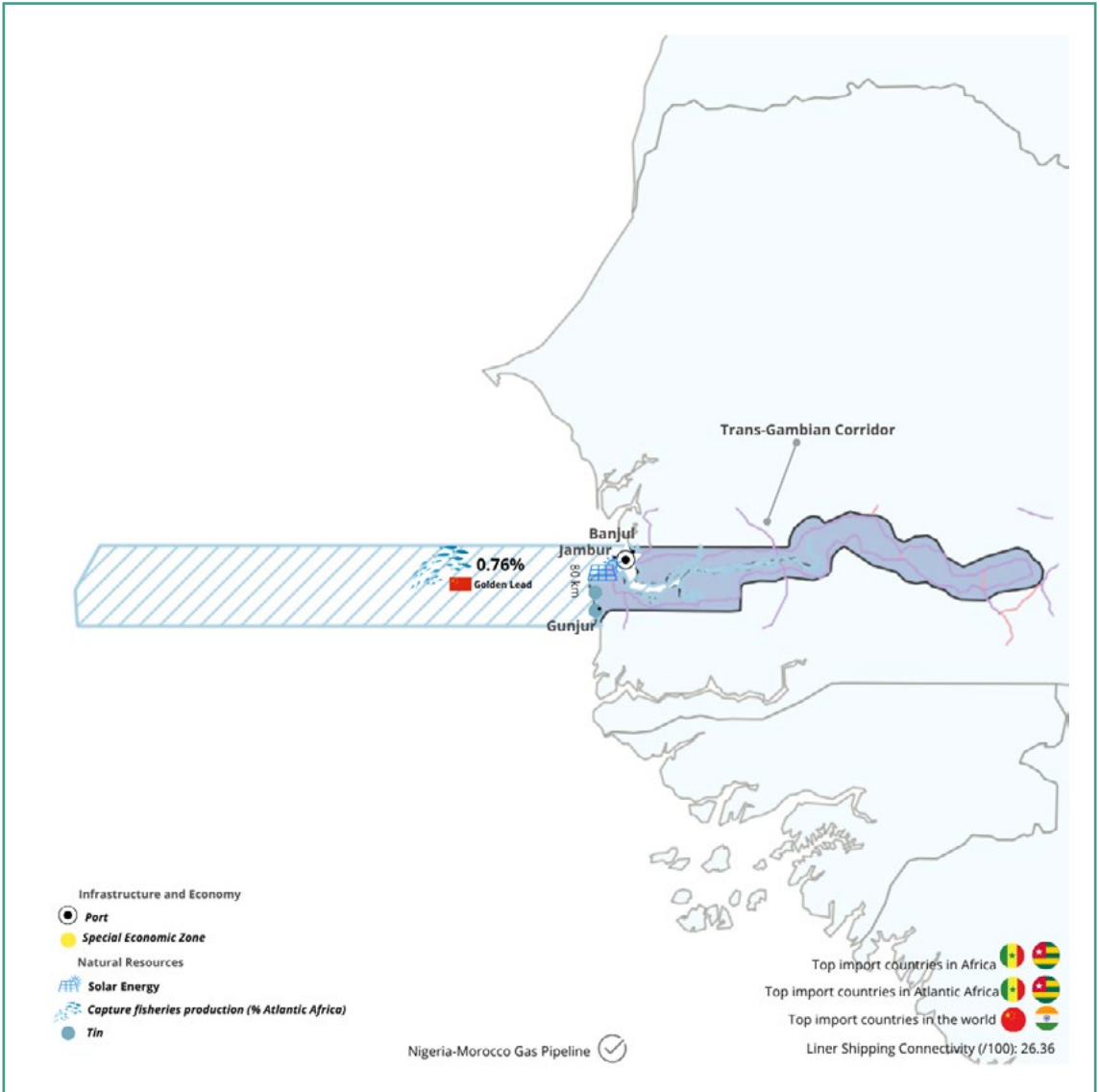
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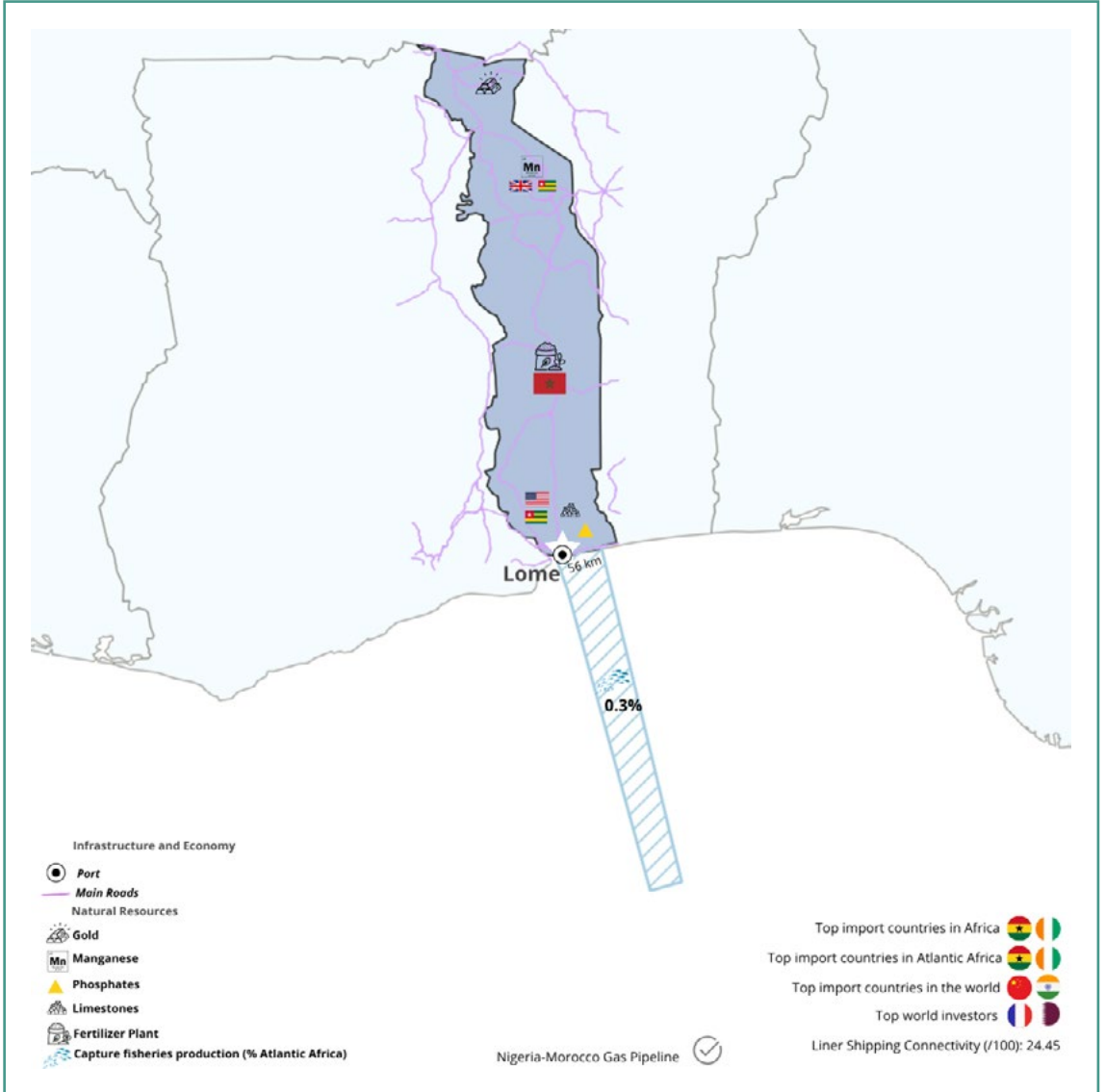
South Africa



The Gambia



Togo



THREE MAPS

- **Why not the Atlantic?**
- **Morocco & Afro-Atlantic Connectivity Map**
 - **Emerging Africa**



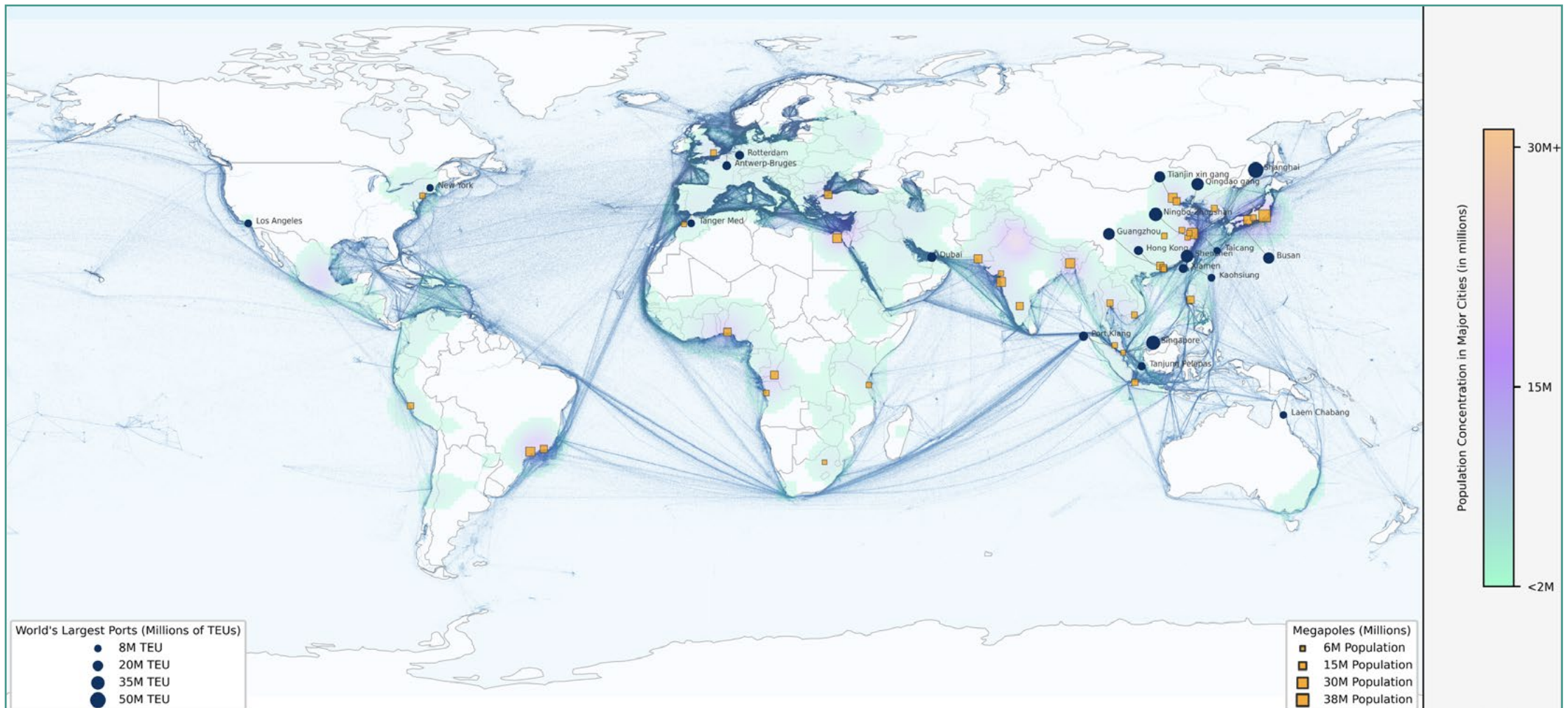
This edition of *Atlantic Currents* highlights the abundant resources and the promising potential of a wider Atlantic. To complement the 25 written contributions, we have included a set of maps that illustrate the diverse and rich assets of the Atlantic Basin. The maps present a panoramic view of the region, with its rich economic, political, and environmental potential, capable of bolstering integration and exchange. They also include trade activity and shipping routes, ports, and corridors connecting large cities and populations across the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans.

The natural resource potential of Atlantic Africa is vast and diversified, including energy resources (oil, gas), minerals, agriculture, and maritime resources. These resources are vital economic drivers for local economies, but also remain sources of dependence on international markets. The region is characterized by complex dynamics of economic transformation, regional integration, and sustainable development. Infrastructure in the region is a pillar of economic integration, with a growing network of ports, roads, and rail corridors. Projects such as the Lobito Corridor, the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor, and the Moroccan Atlantic Initiative reflect the willingness of states to accelerate intra-African trade and facilitate access to Atlantic markets for landlocked countries. The Atlantic part of Africa is becoming increasingly connected, facilitating the flow of goods and services, and boosting the economic competitiveness of its countries. Special economic zones and cross-border cooperation projects offer opportunities for regional integration that are essential to building a prosperous and internationally competitive Atlantic Africa.

The region has made substantial strides in development that will provide a firm base for the construction of a stronger Africa and a world of greater cooperation, mutual growth, and active solidarity. Diversification, coupled with strategic partnerships and information-sharing, could transform the region into a key energy player. Pipeline projects, notably the Nigeria-Morocco gas pipeline, demonstrate the regional cooperative approach to the development and distribution of natural resources. Renewable energy initiatives, such as the solar and wind power projects in Morocco, Namibia, and Cape Verde, also indicate a growing awareness of the need for more sustainable and resilient development.

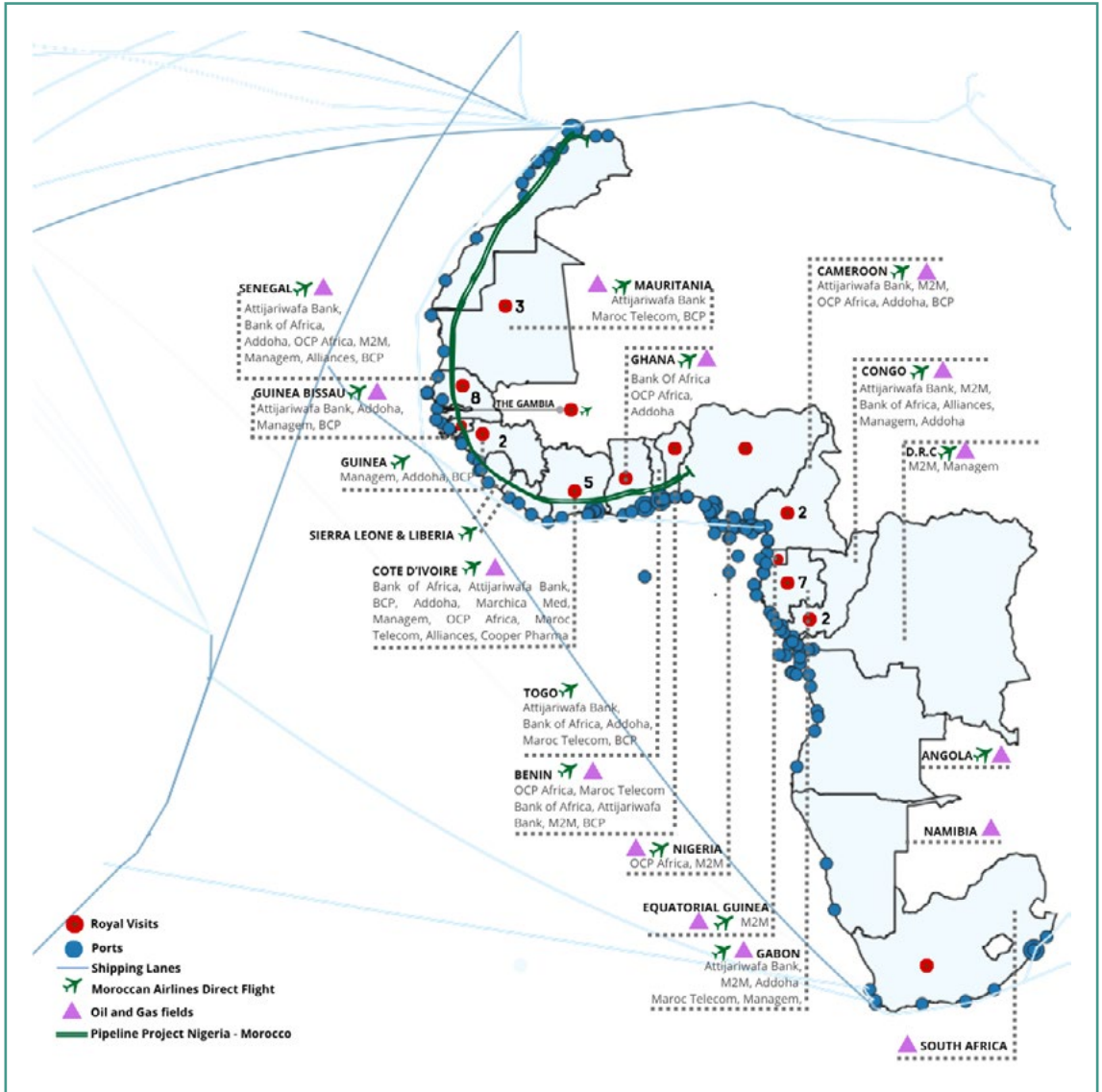
Finally, these maps and the reality they reflect show that Atlantic Africa, far from being a mere commercial crossroads, could become an integrated area of economic cooperation, security, and shared governance. Amid rising global challenges, this region has the potential to become a new space for economic development, collective prosperity, and global cooperation for present and future generations.

Why not the Atlantic? _____

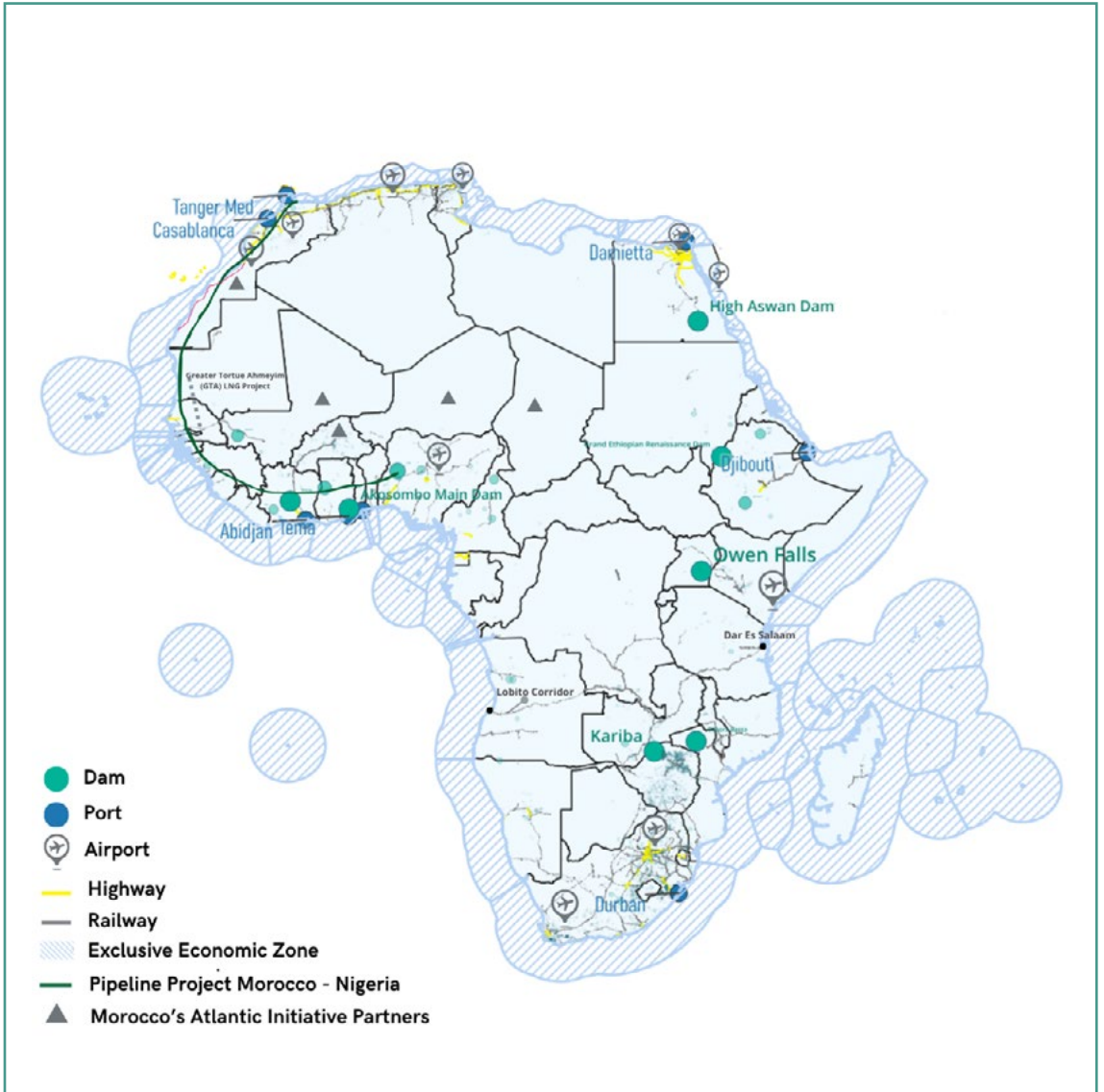


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- One Hundred Ports (2024). One Hundred ports analysis
- World Population Review (2023). Largest Cities by Population

Morocco & Afro-Atlantic Connectivity Map



Emerging Africa



ATLANTIC CURRENTS

The Wider Atlantic : Building Interdependence and Solidarity in a Fragmented World

The 11th edition of **Atlantic Currents** explores the evolving dynamics within the Atlantic region. As the world grapples with profound transformations and unprecedented challenges, the Atlantic Basin emerges as a strategically significant area, transcending the traditional perception of marginalization.

The 2024 edition highlights the intensifying political, economic, and societal exchanges across the region, showcasing its potential to address shared global challenges effectively and its relevance to serve as a platform of dialogue, innovation and collaboration.

Bringing together diverse and enriching insights from both the North and the South, this volume reflects on the Atlantic's role in a shifting geopolitical landscape. The twenty-five chapters offer thought-provoking perspectives on how this shared ocean can foster collaboration on issues of common interest and pave the way for a more interdependent future.

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