



2025 United Nations Ocean Conference, Nice, France 9 – 13 June 2025

UN-Oceans side event

Thursday 12 June 2025, 10:30-11:45 a.m., Room 5

UN-Oceans as a mechanism to mobilize multilateral ocean action and amplify collective impacts toward the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

The side event will showcase UN-Oceans as a mechanism to mobilize multilateral action to confront the triple planetary crisis affecting the oceans and amplify collective impacts towards achievement of SDG14. Panellists will highlight cross-sectoral partnerships, financing mechanisms, regulatory and governance frameworks that enhance ocean conservation and sustainable use.




Discussions will focus on how synergistic multilateral efforts combatting cumulative pressures, promoting sustainable aquatic food systems and ocean economies, preserving natural and cultural heritage, mobilizing finance, increasing climate action, advancing science-based decision-making and following a human-rights based approach, can provide efficient cross-cutting solutions supporting States' efforts to achieve SDG14.

This side event will contribute to the commitment previously announced by UN-Oceans: "Raising awareness of relevant regulatory and policy frameworks and its members activities in support of their implementation, as a foundation for conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and their resources".

UN-Oceans member organizations may also announce their own additional commitments on oceans conservation and sustainable use, pertinent to their respective mandates.



Side Event Programme

Opening of the side event	
	OLA representative and moderator (OLA/DOALOS)
High-level segment	
	<p>Elinor Hammarskjöld, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, UN-Oceans Focal Point</p> <p>Strengthening multilateral action through UN-Oceans to accelerate the achievement of SDG 14</p> <p><i>The Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, in her capacity as UN-Oceans Focal Point, will highlight the role of UN-Oceans as a platform to promote cooperation and coordination at all levels and mobilize cross-sectoral ocean action to amplify our collective efforts to conserve and sustainably use the ocean and its resources.</i></p>
	<p>Ivonne Higuero, Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)</p> <p>Regulation of legal, sustainable and traceable trade in CITES listed marine species as a critical aspect of SDG14 implementation</p> <p><i>On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of CITES' entry into force this year, CITES Secretary-General Higuero will reflect on the contributions of CITES, in regulating sustainable, legal and traceable trade in marine species, for achieving SDG14. The role of partnerships and cooperation for meeting the ambitious global ocean-related targets will be highlighted and key messages on the way forward towards the upcoming World Wildlife Conference (CITES CoP20) and beyond will be delivered.</i></p>
Panel 1. Regulation of human activities for conservation and sustainable use of marine resources	
<p><i>This roundtable will address the following topics: sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, sustainable and resilient maritime transport, marine science, wildlife trafficking, sustainable international and ocean trade, and enforcement and compliance</i></p>	
	Introduction by the moderator (OLA/DOALOS)
	<p>Fredrik Haag, Head, Office for London Convention/Protocol & Ocean Affairs, Subdivision for Ocean Policy and Pollution Response, Marine Environment Division, International Maritime Organization (IMO)</p> <p>Recent examples of IMO's work and key areas of action to promote sustainable shipping</p> <p><i>The presentation will highlight IMO's role in protecting the ocean, with particular focus on areas of cooperation with other UN-Oceans members to support actions to implement SDG 14.</i></p>



	<p>Regina Asariotis, Chief (a.i.), Trade Logistics Branch and Chief, Policy and Legislation Section, Division on Technology and Logistics, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)</p> <p>Recent examples of effective collaborative engagement by UN-Oceans agencies and key recommendations from the 5th UN Ocean Forum on trade-related aspects of SDG 14 – Maritime Transport</p> <p><i>The intervention will (a) highlight the collaborative engagement of UN-Oceans agencies in preparations for UNOC3 and the HLPF 2025 on SDG 14; (b) showcase a highly successful UNCTAD-led collaborative initiative, the 5th UN Ocean Forum on trade-related aspects of SDG 14, held in March 2025; and (c) present some key maritime transport related recommendations. The 5th UN Ocean Forum, co-organized with UN DESA, FAO, UNEP, DOALOS, the Commonwealth Secretariat, OACPS and IOI, among others, resulted in a set of coherent policy recommendations, which will be presented by the co-chairs Costa Rica and France at UNOC 3.</i></p>
	<p>Alison Clausen, Programme Specialist, Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO)</p> <p>The role of ocean science in the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources</p> <p><i>This intervention will discuss the importance of timely and relevant ocean science and knowledge to inform decision making on the regulation of human activities as they affect the effectiveness of the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources.</i></p>
	<p>Diana Fernandez de la Reguera, Climate change specialist, Fisheries and Aquaculture Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</p> <p>Blue Transformation: strengthening science-policy nexus for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture</p> <p><i>Aquatic foods are key to address the challenge to provide food and livelihoods in a context of population growth, biodiversity loss and climate change. FAO's Blue Transformation provides a roadmap to maximize the contribution of aquatic foods to address sustainable goals, through the efficient management of fisheries, the sustainable development of aquaculture and the enhancement of value chains. At its core are strong partnerships—uniting stakeholders across levels to support ecosystem-based management and science-driven policymaking for a more connected, transparent, and effective approach to ocean stewardship.</i></p>
	<p>Giuseppe Sernia, Programme Officer, Global Maritime Crime Programme, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)</p> <p>Maritime environmental law enforcement in and outside national jurisdiction</p> <p><i>Compliance with ocean conservation frameworks relies on effective enforcement, yet limited capacity and jurisdictional challenges often hinder action. This intervention will showcase UNODC's work supporting Member States in strengthening maritime law enforcement and legal frameworks against illicit activities at sea, while emphasizing international cooperation as key to protecting the ocean within and beyond national jurisdiction.</i></p>
	<p>Wrap-up by the moderator</p>



Panel 2. Area-based conservation measures and ocean health monitoring and assessment

This roundtable will address the following topics: 30x30 Target, MPAs and OECMs including in areas beyond national jurisdiction, seabed management, underwater cultural heritage, monitoring and assessment of the marine environment

Introduction by the moderator (OLA/DOALOS)



Jose Dallo, Director of Environmental Management and Mineral Resources, International Seabed Authority (ISA)

Regional Environmental Management Plans: balancing protection and sustainable use of the deep seabed with science-based solutions

This intervention will explore how Regional Environmental Management Plans (REMPs) use data and predictive habitat models to designate protected zones, e.g., Areas of Particular Environmental Interest (APEIs), ensuring biodiversity conservation while enabling regulated resource extraction.



Florence Descroix-Comanducci, Director, IAEA Marine Environment Laboratories, Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Monitoring and Assessment of Ocean Health: a collective effort

In a context of a triple planetary crisis - climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss - the IAEA is engaged in accelerating achievement towards SDG 14 by generating science-based information and building capacity through a variety of activities and initiatives covering these three areas of concern for ocean health. Accelerating the sharing of science-based information generated under the different UN agencies would contribute to meeting the challenge of accelerating achievements on SDG 14 – example of plastic pollution - In this context, UN-Oceans plays an important role as it represents a collaborative and complementary platform of opportunities for information-sharing among the different multilateral instruments and within their respective mandates.



Albert Fischer, Director, WMO Integrated Global Observing System Division, World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Ocean monitoring and climate early warning as building blocks for ocean health

Achieving SDG 14 with sustainable management measures is inevitably connected to the ocean's role in climate and variability and the connected impacts on the ocean ecosystem and its services. Ocean observations and climate early warning systems have a key role in bringing operational science-based knowledge to build to success in SDG 14.



Tatjana Hema, OIC Head of Regional Seas Branch, Ecosystems Division, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP (Regional Seas Programme): Strengthening regional cooperation for area-based conservation and marine environmental assessment

This intervention will highlight how the Regional Seas Programme advances integrated ocean governance through regional action plans, MPA and OECM networks, and coordinated monitoring efforts. It will showcase the RSCAP Vision and Roadmap to support implementation of the KM-GBF 30x30 target and present recent work on BBNJ, including a policy brief developed with GRID-Arendal outlining how existing Regional Seas mechanisms in four selected regions can contribute to BBNJ implementation.



Athena Trakadas, Co-Chair, Ocean Decade Heritage Network (UNESCO-UCH)

The Role of Heritage in Ocean Science under the UN Ocean Decade

As the world faces unprecedented environmental challenges, safeguarding both natural and cultural heritage of the ocean – ocean heritage – has become vital for fostering sustainable ocean stewardship. By emphasizing the foundational role of heritage in ocean sciences and governance, we advocate for a future where cultural heritage is actively integrated into sustainable ocean stewardship, an approach affirms that ocean heritage is not simply a relic of the past but a dynamic, evolving foundation for resilience, positioning heritage as a vital asset in realizing the ambitious goals of the UN Ocean Decade.



Joseph Appiott, Programme Management Officer, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

30x30 in the Ocean: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities

The 30x30 global target, adopted as part of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in 2022, catalyzed renewed attention on area-based conservation. This intervention will report on progress towards the achievements of the targets, reflect on challenges countries are facing and highlight key opportunities to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 30x30 target with linkages to other targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Wrap-up by the moderator



Panel 3. Cross-cutting issues and enabling factors to accelerate achievement of SDG 14

This roundtable will address the following topics: socio-economic aspects and sustainable development, ocean finance, blue economy, and human rights linked with ocean health

Introduction by the moderator (OLA/DOALOS)



Ambassador Carlos Márcio Bicalho Cozendey, Secretary of Multilateral Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Relations, Brazil, Co-Facilitator of the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue (UNFCCC)

Strengthening ocean-based climate action under the UNFCCC process

Ambassador Cozendey will underscore the critical role of finance as an enabler for ocean-based climate action. Drawing on insights from the NDCs and the ocean dialogue, this intervention will identify opportunities for scaling financial flows for implementing ocean-based mitigation and adaptation solutions.



Sangmin Nam, Director, Environment and Development Division, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Initiative for Regional Cooperation on Ocean-based Climate Action

The Initiative for Regional Cooperation on Ocean-based Climate Action (OBICA) in Asia-Pacific, highlighting opportunities to leverage the expertise of UN-Oceans members to support member States in the implementation of related activities according to our mandates.



Smail Alhilali, Director, Division of Circular Economy and Green Industry, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Resource efficiency and the circular economy

UNIDO supports countries in achieving inclusive and sustainable industrial development through resource efficiency, circular economy, and cleaner production assistance. Our BluSolutions program demonstrates that we can enhance industrial competitiveness while reducing environmental impacts, complementing the efforts of UN-Oceans members by unlocking public-private partnerships and scaling cross-sectoral solutions to accelerate progress toward SDG 14.






Giuseppe Mancinelli, Country Director, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

From Goal 14 commitment to action: accelerating implementation through practical solutions

While the world has pledged to protect and sustainably use our oceans, progress on SDG 14 has been slow. Implementation gaps—especially in coastal and island contexts—persist due to limited technical capacity, financing, and infrastructure solutions. UNOPS helps turn commitments into reality by focusing on practical, scalable, and sustainable solutions that enable governments and partners to act.



	<p>Madeleine Nyiratuza, Regional Technical Specialist for Water, Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Africa, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</p> <p>Continental approach to supporting Blue Economy transformation in Africa</p> <p><i>Harnessing the Blue Economy's potential offers a pathway to uplift marginalized populations, create jobs, and promote inclusive growth. Strategic investments in sustainable practices, infrastructure development, and community-based initiatives can unlock the economic benefits of the ocean, fostering a more equitable distribution of wealth and contributing to poverty alleviation across the African continent.</i></p>
	<p>Julien Million, PROBLUE Program Manager, Environment Global Department, World Bank Group</p> <p>Financing solutions: working together for the Ocean</p> <p><i>Bridging the financing gap for SDG14 requires collective action and innovation to mobilize investments. The WBG will discuss how it works with its partners and clients to accelerate funding to scale-up ocean action.</i></p>
	<p>Nela Cernota, Associate Human Rights Officer, Development, Economic and Social Rights Branch, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</p> <p>Human rights-based ocean action as a prerequisite for achieving SDG 14</p> <p><i>The intervention will focus on the interlinkages between the ocean and human rights, emphasising that all life on Earth is dependent upon healthy ocean ecosystems, and that ocean degradation adversely impacts human rights. It will highlight that to achieve SDG 14, measures to protect the ocean need to be grounded in human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, ensuring equality and non-discrimination and the protection of environmental human rights defenders.</i></p>
	<p>Wrap-up by the moderator</p>
<p>Q&A</p>	
	<p>Q&A with the audience</p>
<p>Closing remarks</p>	
	<p>OLA representative</p>