



#YOUTH2030

6th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum CONCEPT NOTE

Thematic Breakout Session

“Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”

30 January 2017
CONFERENCE ROOM E

2:30 – 4:30 pm

United Nations Headquarters, New York

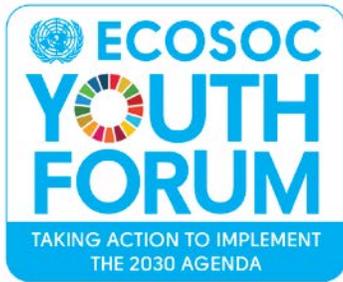
1. Background and Context

Oceans play a key role in sustainable development of not only the littoral and island countries but also the land-locked countries. The impacts of human activities in land-locked countries also affect the health of the Oceans. In “The Future We Want”, Member States stressed the importance of “the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through their contributions to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security and creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change”.

Oceans contribute to poverty eradication by creating sustainable livelihoods and decent work in fisheries and marine aquaculture, shipping and shipbuilding, ports, tourism, oil, gas, mining, and maritime transportation industries. For billions around the world—especially the world’s poorest—healthy oceans mean jobs, food and protection. [FAO estimates](#) that fisheries and aquaculture assure the livelihoods of some 12 percent of the world’s population. It is estimated that even more - over three billion people - depend on marine and coastal resources for their livelihoods, including through tourism and other sectors. More than 90 percent of those employed by capture fisheries in developing countries work in small-scale operations.

At least 90 percent of the volume of global trade is seaborne. Coastal tourism and recreation contribute to economic growth in both developing and developed countries by creating job opportunities and providing an important source of income and foreign exchange earnings. Approximately half of all international tourists travel to coastal areas. In some developing countries, notably Small Island Developing States (SIDS), tourism can account for over 40% of GDP. Livelihoods of people, especially Youth, in the countries depending on the ocean-based economies are provided by goods and services provided by ocean ecosystems.

Oceans are equally important for food security and jobs. They provide food and nutrition, directly through fishing and marine aquaculture, and indirectly through animal feeds. In 2014, fisheries and aquaculture produced over 167 million tons of fish and generated nearly [US\\$150 billion](#) in exports while securing



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access to nutrition for billions of people and accounting for 17 percent of total global animal protein. World per capita fish consumption increased from around 10 to 20 kg since the 1960s, enhancing people's diets through diversified and nutritious food. Even small quantities of fish can have a significant positive nutritional impact on plant-based diets, and this is the case in many LIFDCs and LDCs. Youth directly benefit from the ocean-based food and employments related to fisheries and fish food supply chains. On the other hand, it is youth that is most severely impacted if food insecurity leads to malnutrition with negative outcomes for physical, social, educational and economic welfare.

The employment opportunities, as well as ecosystem services, including provisional, regulating and cultural services, provided by the oceans, create the conditions for a global oceans-based economy, which is estimated at between USD 3-6 trillion/year. It is believed that sustainable ocean-based economic development clearly paves a way for sustainable youth development, particularly in countries with economies depending to a considerable extent on ocean resources. Unfortunately, there is no specific figure for ocean-based economic benefits Youth enjoys. Fisheries and aquaculture labour statistics, for example, largely fail to capture the youth and children working in the sector and, when available, the limited data available is rarely disaggregated by gender. The lack of data and related low sector visibility affect policy decisions, and fisheries and aquaculture policies often fail to integrate employment concerns and recognize the potential of the sector to reduce rural poverty and contribute to local development.

Despite the importance of oceans, ocean and marine ecosystem degradation is accelerating due to development pressure, coastal modification, over-exploitation of living resources, extraction of non-living resources, impacts of climate change, pollution from land-based and sea-based sources. These trends compromise the potential contribution of oceans to overall sustainable development. Based on FAO's analysis of assessed commercial fish stocks, the share of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels decreased from 90 percent in 1974 to 68.6 percent in 2013.

SDG 14 on life below water endeavours to safeguard the healthy, productive and resilient oceans. As demonstrated above, it is closely linked with poverty eradication (SDG1), food security (SDG2), sustainable consumption and production (SDG12), climate change (SDG13), among others. A healthy ocean is fundamental to the global effort to mitigate climate change and its impacts. "Blue carbon" sinks such as mangroves and other vegetated ocean habitats [sequester 25 percent](#) of the extra CO₂ from fossil fuels and protect coastal communities from floods and storms. In turn, warming oceans and atmospheric carbon are causing ocean acidification that threatens the balance and productivity of the ocean.

Life and welfare of youth is directly impacted by these subjects and so besides the direct relevance of oceans for youth, the indirect effects of achieving sustainable use and conservation of oceans, seas and marine will benefit through their positive effect in other SDGs. As is true for all SDGs, specific action by all stakeholders will need to be implemented at all levels.

While policies must be directed to support youth and allow them to fulfil their potential, it is as important to engage the youth in finding the solutions that best fit their needs and give them the opportunity to thrive in the communities they live in. When this does not happen, many times youth are forced to leave their homes, many times doing so under precarious conditions. This session proposes to hear from the youth how to overcome the challenges they face to improve their lives and livelihoods in coastal areas, how to build their capacity and create decent and attractive jobs that are environmentally sustainably and help sustain and improve the health of our oceans



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Albeit the overall array of issues relevant for sustainable ocean development is large and complex, it is proposed this breakout session also serves to focus on one issue for which global awareness needs to be raised further and urgent global actions are needed: marine litter and micro-plastics. While the issue of marine debris, plastics and micro-plastics was the subject of the 17th meeting of the UN open-ended consultative process on oceans and the law of the sea under UNCLOS, held in June 2016, and also discussed at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in May 2016, there remains an urgent need to link the global challenge to individual and institutional actions that can address the issue and raise related awareness among different stakeholder groups. To support global action in this regard UN Environment will launch a Global Campaign on Marine Litter in February 2017. As part of the campaign, it is intended to welcome feedback from participants on platforms or channels through which youth can best be engaged in the implementation of the campaign and to incorporate their feedback to make actions as relevant to them as possible.

2. Objectives

- To inform about the most essential priority challenges in need of action to ensure protection and sustainable use of oceans, seas and related ecosystems, such as those reflected in SDG 14: marine pollution, ecosystems, climate change and ocean acidification, fisheries, marine protected areas and sustainable livelihoods related to ocean activities;
- To give an overview of ongoing youth consultations on SDG 14 and discuss related key messages;
- To discuss and identify potential roles of youth in the international efforts in these subjects and discuss the way youth can contribute to these efforts;
- Serve as an input to the ongoing Oceans/SDG14 Conference Process, as well as the considerations of SDG 14 under the 2017 HLPF;
- A special focus will be to raise awareness of the marine litter issue and seek input from participants on the Global Campaign on Marine Litter.

3. Proposed structure of the event

14:30 Welcome

Moderator: Mara Murillo, UN Environment New York Office

14:33 SDG 14 Conference as opportunity to galvanise necessary action to address ocean challenges

H.E. Luke Daunivalu, Deputy Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations
(5 mins)

14:40 The urgent need to act: overview on the status of our oceans and seas

Ana Persic, UNESCO New York Office

14:47 'Our oceans' means youth's oceans as well! Youth perspectives on necessary action for SDG 14

Overview of key messages collated out of different consultation processes with youth

Global Focal Point Major Group Children and Youth on SDG 14

Ms. Hannah Stanton, TheGoals.org/World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)
(10 mins)



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14:57 Interactive discussion with participants on priority issues to be tackled, role of youth and key recommendations of youth representatives for SDG 14 implementation (60 mins)

Kicked off by two minute interventions of key youth organisations

After conclusion of discussion rapporteur works with Secretariat to identify key messages and recommendations to be reported to plenary

15:50 Focus area for action: marine litter and micro-plastics as concrete example for action

Video on Marine Litter (2 min)

Global Campaign on Marine Litter – Alejandro Laguna, UNEP (4-5 min)

How grass-root action can contribute on the ground to reducing waste and pollution in our oceans

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Moderated discussion (15 min)

16:20 Wrap up and summary by moderator (5 min)

The role of RAPPORTEUR will be fulfilled by one of the MGCY/ICMYO Global Focal Points: Mr. Angga Martha.

The rapporteur is envisioned to report back to the subsequent plenary of the ECOSOC Youth Forum starting at 16:30 on outcomes/key messages of the breakout session. It is envisioned that the reporting back by all breakout sessions will likely be concluded by 17:00.

3. Issues at stake

See Annexes

4. Questions for the audience

On SDG 14 Conference:

- What priority actions and measures do youth representatives demand to be taken by governments and the private sector to reduce negative impact on oceans?
- How can and should communities and individuals take action to assess and reduce their negative impact on oceans?
- How to improve livelihoods of youth living in coastal areas while improving the health of oceans?
- What actions need to be taken to raise awareness with youth on the potential benefits of sustainably used oceans for local livelihoods and to empower young people to actively influence community action to capitalise on such benefits?
- What are ongoing activities among youth organisations geared to contribute to the implementation of SDG 14 and its targets?
- What are key leverage points for



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On marine litter:

- What are the key links between marine litter and youth?
- What are the roles of youth in reducing marine litter in the ocean environment?
- How can youth be leveraged as change agents in working together with other stakeholders and national, regional and global initiatives?

5. Background information

Oceans:

- World Ocean Assessment (www.un.org/Depts/los/global_reporting/WOA_RegProcess.htm)
- Green Economy in a Blue World (www.unep.org/pdf/green_economy_blue.pdf)
- SIDS focused Green Economy (www.unep.org/pdf/Green_Economy_in_SIDS.pdf)
- Blue Economy Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change (apps.unep.org/redirect.php?file=/publications/pmtdocuments/-blue_economy_sharing_success_stories_to_inspire_change-2015blue_economy_sharing_success_stories.pdf.pdf)
- FAO: The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) 2016: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5555e.pdf>

Marine litter

- Plastics in cosmetics factsheet
- Biodegradable plastics and marine litter fact sheet
- Global marine litter campaign fact sheet
- Marine litter study prepared for UNEA-2 (http://www.unep.org/gpa/documents/publications/Marine_Plastic_Debris_and_Microplastic.pdf)
- Report of the SG on marine debris, plastics and microplastics prepared for ICP-17 (http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/71/74)

Coral Reefs

- Coral Reef Unit fact sheets (<http://www.unep.org/esm/Default.aspx?tabid=129870>)
- Status and Trends of the Caribbean Coral Reefs 2007-2012 (<http://www.icriforum.org/caribbeanreport>)
- Status of Coral reefs of the Pacific and outlook: 2011 (<http://www.icriforum.org/sites/default/files/Pacific-Coral-Reefs-2011.pdf>)
- Socio-economic manual for coral reef management (http://www.icriforum.org/sites/default/files/GCRMN_Socioeconomic.pdf)

Oceans, seas and migration

- IOM infosheet on ocean, environment, climate change and human mobility (https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/default/files/publications/MECC%20Infosheet%20Oceans_7Nov2016.pdf)
- Understanding the mobility of fishing people and the challenge of migration to devolved fisheries management (FAO 2008) (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i0448e/i0448e03.pdf>)



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Means of implementation for oceans

- UNESCO-IOC Global Ocean Science Report
(<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/ioc-oceans/sections-and-programmes/ocean-sciences/global-ocean-science-report/>)

Annex 1: SDG 14 and its targets

SDG 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources	
14.1	By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution
14.2	By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans
14.3	Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels
14.4	By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics
14.5	By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information
14.6	By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation
14.7	By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism
14.a	Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries
14.b	Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets
14.c	Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want

Annex 2: Marine litter issues

Marine litter is found in all the world's oceans and seas, even in remote areas far from human contact and obvious sources of the problem, constituting an increasing risk to ecosystem health and biodiversity, while entailing substantial economic costs through its impacts on public health, tourism, shipping, fishing and aquaculture. The estimated natural capital cost of the impact of plastics on marine ecosystems is at least 8 USD billion per year. Concerns are growing about impacts of marine litter on ecosystem health and biodiversity, with marine wildlife harmed through entanglement or consumption of plastic, and the risk of



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microscopic particles of plastic waste transferring toxins into the food chain. Plastic may also serve as a vector for invasive species. In addition, the use of chemical additives in plastic may be hazardous to human health and is gaining increased attention.

Impacts on biodiversity:

Coral reef degradation; overfishing; entanglement and ingestion of plastic.

Impacts on maritime safety:

Collisions; entanglement.

Impacts on human health:

Ocean pollution; bioaccumulation of toxins up the food chain.