

 United Nations Nations Unies

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United Nations - Nippon Foundation
Critical Needs Fellowship Programme

Objectives

Overall goal

The Critical Needs Programme was established by the United Nations (Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs) and the Nippon Foundation as one of the activities under the new Sustainable Ocean Programme. The Critical Needs Programme aims at assisting developing States, particularly least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing States (SIDS), and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) to

- (a) address identified critical needs in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 and other related SDGs; and
- (b) strategically develop and implement national legal and governance frameworks for ocean affairs and the law of the sea in support of sustainable oceans and seas for present and future generations.

Specific purpose

Through the targeted building of human capacity, the Critical Needs Programme addresses needs-based capacity gaps at the national level in order to overcome critical capacity barriers. The purpose is to enable the most vulnerable States to better address strategically important and time-sensitive ocean affairs and the law of the sea issues with which they are faced.

This specific purpose will be achieved through the delivery of critical capacity assistance in the implementation of SDG 14 and related SDGs, in the format of a Fellowship Programme.

Activities

A highly customized individual curriculum is developed by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, in consultation with the nominating State, for the successful candidates. This personalized curriculum will place emphasis on building the capacity of the Fellows to effectively address the high priority needs identified by their States.

In addition, the Fellows are trained in parallel with twelve United Nations – Nippon Foundation Fellows during their practicum phase with the Division. This parallel approach creates an enriched learning environment, providing the Critical Needs Fellows with the opportunity to gain an in-depth and multi-faceted understanding of the legal regime established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the

Sea (UNCLOS) and related agreements, as well as of United Nations multilateral processes relating to oceans.

Through the delivery of presentations by recognized experts, including United Nations staff, as well as through observing United Nations multilateral processes, the Fellows learn about the main developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea relating, for example, to the UNCLOS regime, including the delineation of maritime zones; sustainable fisheries; biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction ('BBNJ'); maritime security; the human dimension of ocean affairs; sustainable ocean-based economies; ocean governance; oceans and climate change; and the implementation of SDG 14 and other relevant SDGs. They will also learn about the activities of the bodies established under UNCLOS (the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, the International Seabed Authority, and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea) and of relevant United Nations system organizations and processes. Fellows will observe or learn about relevant United Nations processes related to oceans, with a view to reinforcing their understanding of ocean affairs and the law of the sea.

For example, depending on the meetings taking place during their tenure, Fellows can expect to observe:

- Sessions of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- The Informal Consultations of States Parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement;
- The United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea;
- The Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects; and
- The Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In addition, Fellows will complete an ocean governance matrix to better understand relevant legal/policy, political/diplomatic and institutional/operational frameworks across ocean sectors at national/regional levels and identify possible gaps.

Professional skills development activities will also be organized for the Fellows, including theory lectures and practical exercises. In particular, the Fellows will receive training by UN staff, as well as by external professionals on:

- Report writing skills, which they will practice by preparing substantive reports relating to the intergovernmental meetings which they observe;
- Presentation skills, which they will practice through presentations to the other Fellows;

- Research skills, including in relation to UN documents;
- Team-building skills; and
- Strategic communication skills.