

**United Nations - Nippon Foundation**  
**Thematic Fellowship Programme**

**Objectives**

**Overall goal**

The Thematic 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 Thematic Fellowship aims at increasing capacity at the national level through in-depth advanced training and research in specific thematic areas of ocean affairs and the law of the sea and related disciplines, including marine science in support of management frameworks, so as to provide the necessary knowledge to assist countries to formulate policies addressing that specific area, in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Professional skills will also be developed.

The specific theme of the current Thematic Fellowship sessions is:

**“The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through UNCLOS and ocean governance frameworks”**

**Activities**

Development and delivery of training to the Fellows to build their knowledge and capacity on the above specific theme over a four-month programme of in-person training at United Nations Headquarters, consisting of a programme of briefings and activities aimed at providing first-hand knowledge and insight into the implementation of ocean affairs frameworks and building a network of resource persons to assist Fellows, as appropriate, in the future.

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.