

REPORT ON THE

2019 United Nations – The Nippon Foundation Alumni Meeting in parallel with the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit and Climate Week NYC

New York, 23-27 September 2019



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1. Introduction

This is the report of the 2019 United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Meeting held in parallel with the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit¹ at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The objective of the 2019 Alumni meeting was to provide participants with an opportunity to engage in discussions relating to the nexus between oceans and climate change, to participate in events organized around the Climate Action Summit 2019, and to meet with recognized climate and ocean experts and professionals. Organizing the meeting in parallel with the Climate Action Summit provided an opportunity to capitalize on the possibility it offered for the Alumni to be introduced to current issues surrounding climate change, and to engage in action-oriented discussions pertaining to climate and oceans. The proposal to focus on issues related to oceans and climate originated earlier in the year from a group of Alumni, who were instrumental in the organization of the meeting.

The Summit and a variety of events within Climate Week NYC 2019 also exposed the Alumni to new ideas and adaptive policy thinking.

During the meeting, the Alumni participated in a wide array of events held during the High-level week of the United Nations General Assembly and Climate Week NYC. Notably, on the 23rd and the 27th of September 2019 respectively, the United Nations - Nippon Foundation Fellowship Alumni, with the facilitation of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS), participated in two events, the first one at the Explorers Club, and the second as part of the SDG Action Zone at United Nations Headquarters. Alumni also participated in a variety of other events and working sessions at DOALOS during the meeting.

This report provides a comprehensive narration of participation of the Alumni in these events.

2. Background

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement recognize the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, when taking action to tackle and adapt to climate change. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas and defines the limits of maritime zones. Better understanding the interplay between these two frameworks will be important in addressing the ocean/climate interface.

The IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and the Cryosphere in a Changing Climate, released in September 2019, increased worldwide understanding and awareness of the relationship

¹ See 'UN Climate Action Summit 2019', available at: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/un-climate-summit-2019.shtml>. See further: Report of the Secretary-General on the 2019 Climate Action Summit and the way forward in 2020. Available at: https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/assets/pdf/cas_report_11_dec.pdf.

between ocean and climate systems. It once again also underlined the need for ambitious action to ensure the long-term sustainability of ocean ecosystems and biodiversity, including in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation action and objectives.

In this context, a number of high-level meetings have aimed to strengthening the momentum for climate and ocean discussions.

The United Nations Climate Summit convened Leaders from around the world to meet in New York from 21-23 September 2019, seeking “concrete, realistic plans to enhance their nationally determined contributions by 2020, in line with reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent over the next decade, and to net zero emissions by 2050.”¹ Within the Climate Summit, specific action areas were identified that have a high potential for promoting global action on mitigation, adaptation and resilience. One of these areas was nature-based solutions, which emphasizes the critical role of oceans.

Two additional high-level meetings took place later in 2019, which emphasized the ‘ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus’, namely the Climate Pre-CoP in Costa Rica (October 2019), and the UNFCCC CoP 25 in Madrid (December 2019), also known as the ‘Blue CoP’,² in view of its aim to raise the profile of the ocean in the climate agenda, as well as to mobilize actions that will enable the implementation of several goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Alumni Network: Fostering ocean and climate synergies

As Alumni and ocean professionals actively engaged in the ocean and climate agendas, it is crucial to be equipped with the right tools to support and participate in ocean-inclusive climate action and climate-inclusive ocean action, which are rooted in the relevant international frameworks for oceans and climate.

The UN Climate Summit and Climate Week represented an opportunity to gather a core group of Alumni, with the objective of observing the Summit and participating in a variety of events organized as part of Climate Week, as well as having in-depth and substantial discussions within the group to identify capacity needs for action-oriented and long-term strategies to support a coordinated implementation of climate and ocean frameworks.

The meeting aimed at establishing a common technical language between the climate and ocean communities, raising awareness, identification of synergies, better understanding of technical aspects, and science-diplomacy links. Therefore, it provided the Alumni with tools to improve their work on oceans and climate change.

Ultimately, the meeting enhanced the role of the Alumni in support of cooperation and coordination amongst ocean and climate experts, decision-makers and stakeholders. Building and reinforcing the capacity of the Alumni in this respect promotes ownership and improvement of actions at the national, regional and international levels.

² Draft Decision 1/CP.25 on oceans and climate. Available at: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/DT.COP25.i18.3.pdf>

3. Participants

The 21 Alumni attending the meeting were ocean professionals drawn from the Alumni Network and from a variety of countries: Brazil, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Fiji, Gambia, Georgia, Indonesia, Jordan, Mexico, the Philippines, Samoa, Seychelles, St. Lucia, Tanzania, Thailand, Tonga, and Viet Nam. These professionals were chosen following a call for expressions of interest made to the entire Alumni Network, to which 70 Alumni responded, demonstrating the large interest and capacity needs in this topic. The final group consisted of 13 women and 8 men (*attached as Appendix 2 is the full list of participants*).

4. Alumni meeting: Working sessions and capacity-building on oceans and climate change

On the first day of the Alumni meeting, Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS, and Mr. Abbas Daher Djama, United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Representative, provided welcoming remarks to the Alumni.

The Alumni meeting started with a presentation introducing the interlinkages between oceans and climate change and the Climate Action Summit, delivered by Ms. Valentina Germani, Senior Legal Officer (Programme Advisor), DOALOS, and entitled “Oceans and climate change: mutually supportive international regimes.”

During the rest of the week, a variety of events took place at DOALOS. In addition, in order to enhance professional opportunities for members of the Alumni Network, events were arranged to enable members of the Alumni Network to speak at the Explorers Club as part of a roundtable on climate and oceans³ (addressing a snapshot of climate change impacts and actions from around the world, focused on sea-level rise, fisheries, and transport), and as members of a panel as part of the SDG Action Zone,⁴ held inside United Nations Headquarters during the United Nations General Assembly High-level week (addressing climate change, oceans, SDGs, maritime transport and capacity-building).

Alumni also signed up to various activities organized in the context of Climate Week NYC and reported back during group sessions at DOALOS.

The following subsections summarize the presentations done by the Alumni on the working sessions at DOALOS and in the side events.

³ See: <https://explorers.org/events/detail/climate-week>

⁴ SDG Action Zone webcast. See: [http://webtv.un.org/search/around-the-world-in-60-minutes-snapshots-of-ocean-and-climate-change-action-sdg-action-zone-during-the-high-level-week-27-september-2019/6090053092001/?term=%22SDG%20Action%20Zone%20during%20the%20High-Level%20Week%20\(27%20September%202019\)%22&sort=date](http://webtv.un.org/search/around-the-world-in-60-minutes-snapshots-of-ocean-and-climate-change-action-sdg-action-zone-during-the-high-level-week-27-september-2019/6090053092001/?term=%22SDG%20Action%20Zone%20during%20the%20High-Level%20Week%20(27%20September%202019)%22&sort=date)

A. Working sessions at DOALOS

Alumni Roundtable: In-region and in-country experiences.
Moderator: Ms. Maria Amalia Rodríguez Chaves, Alumni, Costa Rica
Tuesday, 24 September 2019

Current tracks in the ocean and climate talks at the regional level building up for COP25, the Blue COP

Regional level

- "Because of the ocean declaration" draws attention to the role of the Ocean in UNFCCC discussions and negotiations via a signed declaration by multiple countries. The initiative is driven heavily by the Pacific SIDS.
- Fellows can go to the web page <https://www.becausetheocean.org> and gain awareness of the current meeting and conferences. The web page provides because of the ocean initiatives and outcomes of the regional and national level talks, positions, and capacity needs of the countries to bridge the gap between the two agendas.
- For SIDS, the divide of the ocean and climate agenda is hampering their further multi-sectoral reforms, as funds are getting further divided into the two agendas. The financial divide impacts the sectors at the national level. At the regional level, this is impacting SIDS heavily, and SIDS are needing to use platforms like "Because of the Ocean" to heighten the ocean agenda in the UNFCCC platforms.

**Ms. Zaidy
Nisa, Alumni,
Fiji**

National level Task

SIDS report their progress towards the SDGs through regular Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) submitted to the UN custodian agencies and the high-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. At the same SIDS have to report on their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Climate Change regime.

What is needed to move ahead towards progress? – UN climate Actions

- Firstly it's a must for UN fellows to know their VNRs and NDCs and the national working team in countries of work.
- Use participatory approaches in harmonizing activities and funds into the national evaluation policies that align with the national development plans adopted by the government. The participatory approaches and tools equip a sector or working group on VNRS and NDCs to engage a wide range of stakeholders (hereby public and private, civil society, youths, economically disadvantaged groups, experts, resource users and owners).
- The marine spatial planning tool is being encouraged heavily, however it is yet to be seen how island governments can or will have the capacity to mobilise this tool. It will be interesting to see where countries are already applying this tool for project planning and development.

What is demanded from the UN Alumni Network Ocean experts

**Ms. Mariama
Ndow Jarju,
The Gambia**

1. Replicable solutions, solutions relevant to people as a whole, not just government sectors that support the 17 SDGs, their indicators, and the Climate NDC commitments.
2. A new approach in our respective task or service at government level, civil society, private sector, education and outreach, citizen science and overall ocean and climate governance reforms
3. Right now, we are demanded to communicate effectively, widely, and at the right time to right actors for change to happen. As experts, how can we communicate effectively about the topics at the right time for impact, action and change.

Climate Change and Ocean

Oceans and climate are inextricably linked and oceans play a fundamental role in mitigating climate change by serving as a major heat and carbon sink. Oceans also bear the brunt of climate change, as evidenced by growing acidification, sea level increase, and changes in temperature and currents, all of which in turn impact the health of marine species, ecosystems, and our coastal communities. Climate change in the Gambia is expected to cause a rise in sea level and thus significant impact on coastal areas, especially coastal megacities such as Banjul, the Gambia.

Out of 150 meters of our coastline in Kololi, Gambia, 135 meters has already been lost. Fort James Island which was a slave fort; the island has shrunk to one fifth its original size due the rising sea levels.

The government has put in place the following measures to reduce coastal erosion

- construction of revetments to protect important areas
- innovative sand management, building and rehabilitation of groins
- construction of sea-walls/bulkheads
- public outreach and awareness
- wetland preservation and mitigation

**Ms. Pakjuta
Khemakorn,
Alumni,
Thailand**

Climate Change in Thailand: Impacts on Marine Fisheries

Marine fisheries rapidly developed in Thailand due to:

- High-efficiency fishing gears, methods and technologies adopted.
- Incentives of world fisheries markets.
- Reached 2.83 million tonnes in 1995.

Fish stocks are depleted due to many factors, with additional pressure from climate change!

Potential impacts of climate change on fisheries include impacts on the physical environment, fish stocks, ecosystems, disturbance of coastal infrastructure and fishing operations.

Ms. Gloria
Yona,
Alumni,
Tanzania

Policy side:

- Thailand submitted an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC).
- Climate Change Master Plan, including an Environmentally Sustainable System Plan.

Effect of elevated carbon dioxide and temperature on early life of marine fish

The impacts of elevated carbon dioxide and temperature in the atmosphere on marine organisms are unequivocal. They affect not only marine organisms but also their feeds and habitats. The near-future elevated carbon dioxide and temperature will affect the hatching success, survival and morphology of marine organisms. The rise in marine surface temperature affect primary productivity and farmed seaweeds in the Western Indian Ocean Region. These results indicate that projected future ocean environments will have significant negative impacts on hatching success, and larval survival and morphology of marine fish, which will affect primary productivity and aquaculture of macro algae.

In addition, this situation might have serious ramifications for recruitment of fish species, marine larvae survival due to absence of their feeds and coastal communities who depend on seaweed aquaculture in the most coastal area of Tanzania.

Developing policies and management plans to combat climate changes in the ocean

In Tonga, according to a study by the International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, these are 4 pressing climate issues:

1. Temperatures have increased and consistent with the global pattern of warming
2. Annual rainfall has decreased
3. Sea level has risen by about 6mm per year since 1993
4. Ocean acidification has been increasing.

In 2005, Tonga completed its Initial National Communication (INC) on Climate Change Report. From this report, a Climate Change Policy was developed in 2006 to address issues in the INC. It was revised in 2015 with the goal of a Resilient Tonga by 2035. In addition, and according to the Tonga Fisheries Sector Plan 2016-2024, it addresses fisheries priority activities but especially activities that are affected by climate change. One of those priority activities is the marine spatial planning approach.

Ms. Alice
Helu, Alumni,
Tonga

Roundtable on sea-level rise and international law
Moderator: Mr. Dong Manh Nguyen, Alumni Viet Nam
Thursday, 26 September 2019

The effects of sea-level rise on baselines

Professor Clive Schofield, Head of Research, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, World Maritime University (WMU) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)

The presentation addressed the following items:

- Baselines, Maritime claims and boundaries.
- Sea level rise.
- Potential impacts on:
 - Definition of baselines.
 - Challenges on ambulatory baselines and shifting maritime limits.
 - Delineation of the outer limits of maritime claims.
 - Delimitation of maritime boundaries.
 - Status of islands.
- Response options:
 - ILA Committee on Sea Level Rise and International Law.
 - Emerging State practice in the Pacific.

Pictures from sessions at DOALOS





B. Side Events in other forums

United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Roundtable discussion on climate change and oceans, Explorers Club

Moderator: Mr. Francois Bailet, Senior Legal Officer, DOALOS

Monday, 23 September 2019

Mr. Michael Garcia, Alumni, the Philippines

Sea-level rise - impacts and policy perspectives

Scientific evidence suggests that climate change is accelerating sea level rise which brings serious consequences on how baselines are defined, the delineation of the outer limits of the maritime claims, and the delimitation of maritime boundaries. Coastlines are, by nature, dynamic due to their natural interaction with the ocean. Sea level rise could cause rapid changes to the configuration of the coastlines. Thus, the normal baselines as defined under the United Nations

Convention on the Law of the Sea are “ambulatory” and, consequently, the outer limits of maritime claims measured from such baselines could also change positions. State practice in response to sea level as it impacts maritime claims delineation and boundary delimitation is still evolving. To ensure the legal certainty and avoid misunderstandings among coastal States, there is need to support State practice that discourages the adjustment of baselines and outer limits as coastlines are altered by sea level rise. The international community should also support actions by small island States to ensure that their territorial integrity is preserved as sea level rise threaten their very existence.

Coastal Adaptation Laws and the Social Justice of Policies to address Sea Level Rise (SLR): An Indonesian insight

Climate change and sea level rise (SLR) pose serious risks to coastal communities around the world requiring nations to apply adaptation laws and policies. Climate change will exacerbate the threats to vulnerable communities, such as the poor, and threaten the food security of populations in coastal areas through the effects of flooding due to coastal inundation. Indonesia is an Archipelagic State of over 17,000 islands and is extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts in its coastal areas and especially in its highly populated low-lying delta areas, such as Jakarta and Semarang, which are extremely vulnerable to sea level rise.

The adequacy of the legal adaptation framework in Indonesia to respond to this climate vulnerability is assessed. It is found to have limited consideration of the community burden arising from these climate and SLR uncertainties and we consider a social justice approach could assist government to respond to the impacts from these issues and to their implications for vulnerable groups. The nation should improve adaptive legal measures to address climate change impacts and increase the involvement of local people in climate change adaptation decision-making. A supportive institutional framework is also essential to assist policy makers incorporate adaptation into decision making in a way that can increase social justice outcomes for these vulnerable communities.

Climate Change and sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Seychelles

Because of its size and topography, Seychelles has limited opportunities for land-based developments. As a result, the fisheries sector is critically important both for food security and for economic development. Culturally, fishing occupies an important place in the lives of the Seychellois people. We have one of the highest per capita consumptions of fish, with most recent figures standing at around 60kg per annum.

The artisanal fishery in Seychelles occurs predominantly on the Mahe Plateau. The Mahe Plateau is a steep-sided plateau approximately 40,000 square km in area that rises rapidly from around 1000m. The 3 main islands of Seychelles are located on this plateau. The plateau is made up predominantly of subsurface granite and

Laely
Nurhidayah,
Alumni,
Indonesia

Mr. Yannick
Roucou,
Alumni,
Seychelles

coral outcrops forming banks with depths of around 60m. The abovementioned characteristics makes it an ideal ground for small-scale fisheries predominantly the artisanal fishery. This fishery is a multi-species, multi-gear fishery. The main target species are demersal, reef associated and semi-pelagic fish species such as snappers, emperors and groupers which are fished by using hand line, fish traps and beach seines. Overexploitation of these resources is a recognized threat. Of concern is the percentage of juvenile fish in the catch as a result of the small size of the mesh of the fish trap. Another concern is the heavy seasonal fishing pressure on spawning aggregations of some important species to the ecosystem such as rabbitfish, parrotfish and goatfish.

As overexploitation of fisheries resources increases the vulnerability of coastal communities by decreasing the resilience of these marine ecosystems, Seychelles is putting in place a number of measures to better manage the Mahe Plateau. Measures in the Mahe Plateau Co-management Plan include:

- A reinforced ban of use of explosives, poison and noxious substances and spear guns
- Minimum size for some key species e.g parrot fish
- Introduction of a bag limit for recreational/sports fishers
- Limits on the trap fishery: e.g. limits on the number of traps, where they can be put, no traps to be left at sea overnight

In addition to the Mahe Plateau Co-management Plan, Seychelles is currently undergoing a comprehensive review of its fisheries legislations notably the Fisheries Act 2014 and Fisheries Regulations 1987. It is worth noting that a guiding principle included in the draft act is **“an ecosystem approach shall be applied to the management and development of fisheries and aquaculture and to promote the health of the general marine environment, and shall take into account climate change and relevant international commitments and global developments.”**

Tuna and their contribution to the sustainable development of Pacific SIDS

Key messages

- Climate change is happening now and is likely to intensify in the coming decades.
- Superimposing ENSO on a general warming trend will lead to higher frequency of “big” El Niño events – as in 2015-2016.
- Key impacts in the Pacific of relevance to fisheries are rising sea surface temperatures (SST), de-oxygenation, reduced productivity, ocean acidification.
- Decreased abundance of SKJ and YFT in the WCPO particularly post-2050 (eastwards shifts); less impact on bigeye, albacore highly uncertain.
- Western equatorial EEZs likely to bear the brunt of changes.

- Robust fisheries Management
 - Strengthening zone based management.
 - Development of adaptive management regimes (national; sub/regional and regional).
- Other related matters
 - Estimating and understanding the social and economic impacts climate change on fisheries.
 - Ensuring adaptive mechanisms are built into WCPFC CMMs.
 - Improved understanding of the likely impact on maritime boundaries; disaster risk management; food security; and ozone depleting substances.
 - Ensuring rights to high seas fishing – noting that stocks may increase on the eastern high seas.
 - Onshore investment to account for spatial shifts.
 - Continued investment in science to provide an “early warning system” for changes.
 - Enhanced collaboration among agencies to increase the members’ understanding of the cause and effects of the impacts of climate change on Pacific tuna.

Transport, impacts and policy perspectives

Ports are heart of international trade and globalization. But they are also exposed to the risk of climate change. Port sectors are vulnerable to sea level rise as well as extreme events.

The Brazilian port system consists of more than one hundred multimodal public and private structures. Of these, 37 or 38 are located in the coastal zone. In 2015 a report from the federal Government showed that Brazilian ports are already exposed to climate change impacts.

The science related to understanding the impacts of climate change is advancing over time. But, unfortunately, in Brazil the implementation of adaptation and mitigation strategies related to climate change still is at embryonic stage. For example the waterway environmental agenda 2018/2019 highlights one single action related to climate change.

The Brazilian port sector has many challenges ahead. One of the biggest is still insufficient political capacity to deal with climate change topics. Another point is the lack of money/funds to invest in technology, future projections, capacity building etc. Another bottleneck is the limited procedural permanence arising from short-term mandates, also inadequate instruments to ensure effective law enforcement. Climate change should be internalized in all sectors of a port system. We need to address climate change impacts through port policies, plans and guidelines.

**Ms. Katryana
Madeira,
Alumni, Brazil**

Climate change in the policy agenda of the European Port Authorities

**Ms. Anna
Natova,
Alumni,
Bulgaria**

Nowadays a large number of problems facing ports are climate-related. Climate goals, green financing and innovation are the main priorities of the Port Authorities. In order to achieve these goals they will need to invest in innovation and research. But also ports suffer the impacts of climate change. Extreme weather conditions and changing climate affect the operability of the ports.

In this context, ports need to adapt the infrastructure to accommodate these climate induced demands. This will require renewed focus on research and innovation.

Pictures from the event





Side Event: “Around the World in 60 Minutes: Snapshots of Ocean and Climate Change Action.”⁵
Moderator: Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS
Friday, 27 September 2019

SDGs, Oceans and Climate Change

**Ms. Mariamalia
 Rodríguez,
 Alumni,
 Costa Rica**

Climate and oceans are interconnected!

The ocean is the single most important driver of our climate and Earth systems, while supporting the livelihoods of millions of people around the world. However, no part of the ocean has today completely escaped the impact of human pressures, including the most remote areas.

The fate of our oceans and climate are indivisibly linked, and that’s now clearer than ever with the release of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

From science, we can understand that the capacity of the ocean to buffer climate change and absorb greenhouse gas emissions is not

⁵ “The SDG Action Zone, held during the High-level week of the UN General Assembly, was a space to break out and engage partners for transformative SDG action in new and innovative ways.” SDG Action Zone. The webcast of this event is available at: [http://webtv.un.org/search/around-the-world-in-60-minutes-snapshots-of-ocean-and-climate-change-action-sdg-action-zone-during-the-high-level-week-27-september-2019/6090053092001/?term=%22SDG%20Action%20Zone%20during%20the%20High-Level%20Week%20\(27%20September%202019\)%22&sort=date](http://webtv.un.org/search/around-the-world-in-60-minutes-snapshots-of-ocean-and-climate-change-action-sdg-action-zone-during-the-high-level-week-27-september-2019/6090053092001/?term=%22SDG%20Action%20Zone%20during%20the%20High-Level%20Week%20(27%20September%202019)%22&sort=date)

Mr. Hendra Siry, Alumni
Indonesia

limitless, and the price to be paid is high, very high, as the effects on the marine environment include a) warming, b) raising sea levels, c) ocean acidification, d) deoxygenation, e) biodiversity loss and shifts in the distribution of fish populations, f) marine heat-waves, among many others. These impacts are happening or will occur across all latitudes, making this a global concern.

Keeping up the ambition to implement SDG 14: Life below water

SDGs are indivisible in the task to balance social and environmental imperatives with economic development. The 2030 Agenda sets out a 15-year roadmap for international action on critical pillars to achieve sustainable development.

The negotiations for a new treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ process), areas that are located beyond a country's exclusive economic zone and that cover 46% of our planet, represents a unique opportunity towards achieving target 14.C, calling for countries to make progress in ratifying ocean-related instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources. Just as the Paris Agreement sent a message in 2015 that the world was ready to work together towards climate protection, this new ocean treaty provides the opportunity to demonstrate that the world is ready again to take ambitious and strong decisions that will benefit almost half of our blue planet.

There is an urgency of prioritizing timely, ambitious, coordinated and continuous action. Momentum is growing, and we need a tsunami of efforts to protect the global ocean and the global climate is arising. We all agree that we cannot do one without the other, and that we depend on them for our own survival.

Blue carbon ecosystems

The role of blue carbon ecosystem or coastal wetland ecosystems is crucial in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The blue carbon ecosystems, which comprise mangrove, tidal salt marshes and sea-grass meadows, provide excellent opportunities for nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The presentation highlighted the importance of conservation and restoration of coastal wetland ecosystems and how they can provide crucial mitigation pathways while offering many goods and services to coastal communities. It focused on the Coral Triangle area and the use of this area by Indonesia, as a showcase.

Blue carbon is important in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Blue carbon ecosystems can offer excellent opportunities for nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The condition of blue carbon ecosystems in Indonesia and the Coral Triangle highlight the importance of conservation and restoration of coastal wetland ecosystems and how they can provide crucial mitigation pathways while offering many goods and services to coastal communities.

Climate Change and the National Maritime Transport Policy

Agenda: A Georgian Perspective

Maritime transport was not explicitly considered under the Paris Agreement and as a result was never included in the national climate action plan. In April 2018, the IMO adopted an initial strategy on this matter, which aims at the reduction of total annual GHG emissions from ships by at least 50% by 2050, compared with 2008, and includes quantitative reduction targets through 2050, with short-term, mid-term and long-term policy measures to help achieve the targets.

Given the vital importance of international maritime transport for global trade, meeting the climate change challenge is imperative. With 80% of the volume of world trade carried by sea, international shipping and ports provide crucial linkages in global supply-chains and are essential for the ability of all countries, including those that are landlocked, to access global markets. Therefore it is considered vital to include climate change elements in the National Maritime Transport Policy Agenda.

Georgia as one of the leading pilot countries under the Global Maritime Energy Efficiency Project (GloMEEP) volunteered to develop Rapid Assessment for determining the country's maritime energy efficiency and emissions status in order to implement carbon emissions free shipping with a low Sulphur future. We commit ourselves to implement this task in coming months.

Ports and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Ports are intensive energy consumers, both of electricity and fossil fuel, and thousands of ships inevitably rely on their services, yet they bring with them air pollution. Ports represent three per cent of the world's Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) emissions, the same as international shipping, as reported by the IMO. Therefore, ports need to focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation, as they are a huge contributor to global warming. In fact, national frameworks govern

**Ms. Tamar Ioseliani,
Alumni Georgia**

**Mr. Anas Saleh
Mohammad Alamoush,
Alumni Jordan**

ports, yet they also have to comply with the Paris Agreement and other climate change legal frameworks.

In terms of mitigation, ports can employ energy efficiency measures to reduce energy consumption, and improve their operations, including technologies and behavioural change within the port environment. For example, move towards digitalization, electrification of equipment, the utilization of smart port concept and integration of renewable energy such as wind, solar, ocean and geothermal. On the other hand, ports could facilitate shipping GHG reductions by providing on-shore power supply for ships, aside from other incentives given to ships to reduce their speed and become greener.

An outstanding issue is that not all ports implement GHGs emission measures due to barriers, such as uncertainties in regulations, the danger that they may lose their competitiveness if they enforce such measures on customers, and difficulties in obtaining capital. Therefore, the GHGs emissions abatement measures are not yet mature in many ports all over the world.

On the other hand, ports can contribute to climate change adaptation. Sea level is rising, and ports can build barriers and/or change their location to ensure countries are not disconnected in the future. By maintaining trade and transport through adaptation to climate change, ports contribute to other sustainable development goals (SDGs). That is, Goal 1: limiting poverty; Goal 6: clean water as climate change adaptation prevents the seep of sea water into cities; Goal 7: utilization of renewable energy to reduce GHGs emissions; Goal 8: provision of jobs for locals; Goal 11: building sustainable cities and communities; and Goal 12: by maintaining normal level of consumption. In the case that ports don't adapt, they lose their business, which the whole country's economy is dependent on. As a result, the consumption and production gap gets disrupted.

As part of their corporate social responsibility, it is highly recommended that ports actively engage in climate change adaptation and mitigation yielding benefits in local, regional and international level. Thus, capacity building programs need to continue to strengthen ports' positions in this regard.

Capacity-building for the implementation of national and international law on ocean governance and climate change

Importance of Capacity-Building:

As small island developing states (SIDS), we can agree that the successful implementation of our national legislations and policies is dependent on the capacity of institutions fulfil their roles. Resource

Mr. Everett Sioa, Alumni
Samoa

Ms. Yvonne Edwin,
Alumni St. Lucia

mobilization to augment capacity development is fundamental and the call for continuous support from development partners and the donor community are urgently needed. Increasing awareness of the impacts of climate change on our ocean is just the first action towards combatting climate change. Enforcing our laws and policies on climate change is the next action that follows.

Capacity Constraints and the Need for Capacity Development:

The reality for small island developing states is that it is often difficult to meet our international legal obligations and commitments given the capacity constraints we face. The capacity of national governments in SIDS have been limited by a range of factors including the availability of financial, technical and human resources. The need to have adequate institutions to implement and enforce our international legal obligations are of utmost importance.

Role of international law and SDGs in addressing capacity Building Needs:

International Law and SDGs play an important role in addressing capacity-building needs particularly for SIDS. The need for capacity-building to assist national authorities in SIDS to respond to climate change has long been recognized under international law on climate change and ocean governance. For example, Article 11 (paragraph 3) of the Paris Agreement, SDG 13 (Target 13.3), SDG14 (Target 14.c) addresses the need to enhance support for capacity-building actions in developing countries. Overall addressing capacity development needs is an essential building block of successful sustainable development to ensure that the States are able to meet their international obligations.

Climate Action towards a pollution free ocean - the role of education

Predictions indicate that by 2050 the ocean will contain more plastic than fish by weight. Globally the pressures on oceans have increased significantly due to marine litter and the adverse effects of climate change.

Therefore, the impact of Climate Change is inescapable and the call for immediate climate action comes at a time when both science and recent phenomenon have proven that the time for action is NOW. Compounding the issue even further, are the extreme threats that Small Island Developing State (SIDS) face in the wake of climate Change and SIDS vulnerability.

For these reasons, the importance of public awareness, education and information sharing cannot be over emphasized. Environmental

education and capacity-building has the potential to change behavior, impart knowledge and understanding. Active public awareness campaigns and well-supported environmental education school programs have the potential to reach a wide audience.

What has worked:

- The use of multiple mediums coupled with creative and innovative techniques that can engage and influence the movers of change (the youth)
 - To revamp and actively support environmental clubs in school
 - Formulate clear and enticing messages and PSAs in simple language that are action-oriented
 - Establish partnerships and collaboration with related stakeholder agencies to build synergies and merge efforts
 - Formulate powerful advocacy instruments
-

Pictures from the event



C. Group Discussion on lessons learned and capacity needs identified during the week

Moderators: Abbas Daher Djama and Maria Amalia Rodriguez-Chaves, United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Representative and Deputy Representative

Key issues discussed:

- **Capacity-building (CB) needs:**
 - Opportunities for short courses for senior/higher-level people.
 - Topics of CB could include reporting on SDGs and NDCs, marine spatial planning, marine protected areas, nature-based solutions, climate change adaptation, using the maritime space to address climate change (MSP + Blue economy + Ocean Governance).
 - Increase leverage between Alumni and meeting forums/conferences.
 - Increase synergies with academia.
 - Share relatable & replicable experiences on cross-sectoral coordination.
 - Broader CB interventions in countries, trying to address technical assistance.
 - Support more tangible projects.
 - Having events in places where climate change is happening, as it is not enough only to discuss.
 - Sea-level rise and UNCLOS evolution.
 - Opportunities for individual trainings on specific thematic issues.
 - Mentoring programme as a tangible activity.
 - Trainings in countries with broader audiences than only Alumni.
 - Follow-up SDG Voluntary Commitments, having in mind the Ocean Conference in Lisbon (2020).
 - Short courses, specific topics, different languages, etc.

- **Benefits of Alumni Meetings and lessons learnt:**
 - The variety of backgrounds of the Alumni is an opportunity for interdisciplinary and cross-regional work. New perspectives and information can be shared when everyone returns home.
 - Collaboration with other sectors. Build capacity among the Alumni. Connections among Alumni experts to help everyday tasks.
 - Tangible value in working together.
 - Build and engage the network. Bridging networks.
 - Identification of gaps of knowledge.
 - Missing participation on the formal Climate Summit had the consequence that potential actions could be loosen or diluted.
 - The events of Climate Week had different contexts.
 - Community-building with new Fellows and other Alumni.
 - Role of education and participation of youth.
 - Role of science: tailor to be understood by different audiences.
 - Importance of innovation: creative ways to apply technology.
 - Importance of coordination through ocean governance.
 - Accountability is key.

- Women's empowerment.
- Suggestion of live-streaming Alumni meetings so that other Alumni that can't participate have the chance to virtually join.
- Linking technical information with international legislation.
- Side events of Climate Week showed initiatives from different stakeholders in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Contributions from civil society.
- Build synergies.

Appendix 1: Alumni meeting agenda

**2019 United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Meeting in parallel with the United Nations 2019 Climate Action Summit and Climate Week NYC
New York, 23-27 September 2019
Programme**

23 September 2019

1. Arrival and greetings, DOALOS, 9:30am-10:30am

2. Opening and welcome, DOALOS, 10:30am – 11:00am

Moderator: Ms. Valentina Germani, Senior Legal Officer, DOALOS

Remarks by: Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS on behalf of

Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel;

Mr. Abbas Daher Djama, United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Representative

3. Overview of the Alumni Meeting Programme, DOALOS, 11:00am - 11:30am

4. Introduction on oceans and climate change and Climate Action Summit, DOALOS, 11:30am - 1:00pm

Presentation: *Oceans and climate change: mutually supportive international regimes*

Ms. Valentina Germani, Senior Legal Officer (Programme Advisor), DOALOS

Observation of the Climate Action Summit

5. United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni Roundtable discussion on climate change and oceans, Explorers Club, 5:00pm - 6:00pm

Moderator: Mr. Francois Bailet, Senior Legal Officer, DOALOS

Remarks by: Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS

Presentations:

Sea-level rise (impacts and policy perspectives)

Mr. Michael Garcia, Alumni, the Philippines

Laely Nurhidayah, Alumni, Indonesia

Fisheries (impacts and policy perspectives)

Mr. Yannick Roucou, Alumni Seychelles

Ms. Anama Solofa, Alumni, Samoa

Transport (impacts and policy perspectives)

Ms. Katryana Madeira, Alumni, Brazil

Ms. Anna Natova, Alumni, Bulgaria

6. Opening Reception for Climate Week, Explorers Club, 6:00pm - 7:00pm

24 September 2019

1. Alumni Roundtable: In-region and in-country experiences, DOALOS, 10:00am – 12:00pm

Moderator: Ms. Maria Amalia Rodriguez-Chaves, Alumni, Costa Rica

Presentations:

Oceans and climate - Regional perspectives

Ms. Zaidy Nisa, Alumni, Fiji

Ms. Mariama Ndow Jarju, The Gambia

Effects of climate change on fisheries

Ms. Anama Solofa, Alumni, Samoa

Ms. Pakjuta Khemakorn, Alumni, Thailand

Ms. Gloria Yona, Alumni, Tanzania

Ms. Alice Helu, Alumni, Tonga

2. Climate Week Activities, various locations, 1:00pm onwards

Including:

The State of Carbontech 1:00pm -7:00pm, Canadian Consulate General

From Ambition to Action 4:00pm -7:30pm, Urban Tech Hub

Water: The Ultimate Risk 4:30pm – 8:30pm, Reuters, Times Square

25 September 2019

1. Climate Week Activities, various locations, 8:30am – 11:00am

Including:

The Race to Zero Emissions, 8:30am - 11:00am, Scandinavia House

Zero Emissions Shipping 9:30am - 11:00am, Downtown Manhattan

2. Alumni Activities, DOALOS, 1:30pm – 4:00pm

Reports by Alumni on Climate Week Activities 1:30pm – 3:00pm

Moderator: Ms. Jessica Howley, Associate Legal Officer, DOALOS

Oceans and the climate agenda 3:00pm – 4:00pm

Moderator: Ms. Valentina Germani, Senior Legal Officer, DOALOS

Presentation: *Addressing the Ocean and Climate Nexus: A focus on islands*

Ms. Kate Brown, Executive Director of the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)

4. Event: IPCC Special Report on The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate, Explorers Club, 5:00pm - 6:30pm

26 September 2019

1. Climate Week Activities, various locations, 9:00am – 1.30pm

Including:

Beyond Headlines 9:00am -10:30am, American Museum of Natural History

Preventing Climate Change 12:00pm – 1:30pm, Cornell Club

2. Alumni Activities, DOALOS, 3:00pm – 5:30pm

Roundtable on sea-level rise and international law 3:00pm – 4:30pm

Moderator: Mr. Dong Manh Nguyen, Alumni, Viet Nam

Presentation: *The work of the International Law Commission on sea level rise in relation to international law*

Ms. Patricia Georget, Legal Officer, Codification Division, Office of Legal Affairs

Presentation: *The effects of sea-level rise on baselines*

Professor Clive Schofield, Head of Research, WMU-Sasakawa, Global Ocean Institute, World Maritime University (WMU) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)

Report by Alumni on Climate Week Activities 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Moderator: Ms. Jessica Howley, Associate Legal Officer, DOALOS

3. Evening Activities, various locations

Including:

Closing Reception and Presentation by Bill McKibben, 6:00pm - 8:00pm, Explorers Club

How to Talk about Climate Change 7:00pm - 9:00pm, American Museum of Natural History

Climate and Ocean Actions 6:00pm – 8:00pm, WeWork 135 Madison

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|--------------------------|
| 27 September 2019 |
|--------------------------|

1. SDG Action Zone: Around the World in 60 minutes, UNHQ, 8:00am - 9:00am

Snapshots from Alumni of the United Nations – Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programmes

Welcome and introduction

Moderator, Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS

Snapshot: Oceans, climate and the SDGs

Ms. Mariamalia Rodriguez (Costa Rica): SDGs, Oceans and Climate Change

Mr. Hendra Siry (Indonesia): Blue carbon ecosystems

Snapshot: Transport

Ms. Tamar Ioseliani (Georgia): Climate Change and the National Maritime Transport Policy Agenda: A Georgian Perspective

Mr. Anas Saleh Mohammad Alamoush (Jordan): Ports and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Snapshot: Education and capacity-building

Mr. Everett Sioa (Samoa): Capacity-building for the implementation of national and international law on ocean governance and climate change

Ms. Yvonne Edwin (St Lucia): Climate Action towards a pollution-free ocean - The role of education

2. Climate Week Activities, various locations

Including:

International Pathways: Cities Decarbonizing 9:00am – 12:00pm Building Energy Exchange

3. Alumni Activities 2:30pm - 5:30pm

Report by Alumni on Climate Week Activities, DOALOS

Moderator: Ms. Jessica Howley, Associate Legal Officer, DOALOS

Group Discussion on lessons learned and capacity needs identified during the week

Moderators: Mr. Abbas Daher Djama and Ms. Maria Amalia Rodriguez-Chaves, United Nations
– Nippon Foundation Alumni Representative and Deputy Representative

4. Closing 5:30pm - 5:45pm

Remarks by: Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS

Appendix 2: List of Alumni participants

| Participants in the UN-Nippon Foundation Alumni Meeting, NYC 2019 | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|--------|--|
| Last Name | First Name | Country | Gender | Email |
| Alamouh | Anas | Jordan | Male | anassa82@gmail.com |
| Daher | Abbas Djama | Djibouti | Male | daher.abbas@hotmail.fr |
| Drammeh | Famara | The Gambia | Male | famsken_jnr@hotmail.co.uk |
| Edwin | Yvonne Marlyne | St. Lucia | Female | msyedwin@gmail.com |
| Garcia | Michael Lyndon Belencion | The Philippines | Male | michaellyndonbgarcia.bkkpe.2019@gmail.com |
| Helu | Alice Roxane Lasini | Tonga | Female | arolana4@gmail.com |
| Ioseliani | Tamara | Georgia | Female | Tamaraioseliani@gmail.com |
| Khemakorn | Pakjuta | Thailand | Female | pakjuta@gmail.com |
| Madeira | Katryana Camila | Brazil | Female | katryoceano@gmail.com |
| Mihneva-Natova | Anna Stoyanova | Bulgaria | Female | anna_natova@yahoo.com |
| Ndow Jarju | Mariama | The Gambia | Female | marindow1@gmail.com |
| Nguyen | Manh Dong | Viet Nam | Male | manhdong2002@yahoo.com |
| Nisa | Zahidah Afrin | Fiji | Female | zaidy.oceans@gmail.com |
| Nurhidayah | Laely | Indonesia | Female | laely@yahoo.com |
| Rodriguez Chaves | Maria Amalia | Costa Rica | Female | mariamalia.rodriguez.chaves@gmail.com |
| Rodríguez Cortés | Liliana | Mexico | Female | lilioceans@gmail.com |
| Roucou | Yannick Jude | Seychelles | Male | yroucou@sfa.sc |
| Sioa | Everett Aisoli | Samoa | Male | evi.sioa@gmail.com |
| Siry | Hendra Yusran | Indonesia | Male | hendrasiry@gmail.com |
| Solofa | Anama Vaifou Myra | Samoa | Female | asolofa@gmail.com |
| Yona | Gloria Kavia | Tanzania | Female | glokavia@yahoo.com |

Appendix 3. Pictures of the Alumni attending side events organized within Climate Week

