

AGN Intervention
2026 Ocean and climate Dialogue (Panel 1)
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Distinguished Co-Facilitators, Excellencies, and Colleagues,

1. I am honored to speak today on behalf of the African Group (AGN). At the outset, let me thank the co-facilitators for their excellent work in convening the informal consultations and for sharing the information note ahead of this dialogue.
2. As we step into the 3rd cycle of NDCs, our collective focus must shift decisively from defining high-level ambition to securing the structural machinery of localized delivery.
3. For the African continent, the ocean is a foundational pillar of food security, coastal economies, and climate resilience. While we welcome the growing inclusion of ocean action in national climate strategies, the core problem remains translating these paper commitments into real-world, on-the-ground implementation.
4. Data across 20 NDCs out of the 38 coastal and island nations that define Africa's maritime footprint demonstrates that our nations are actively integrating ambitious marine and coastal actions into their national climate strategies.
5. To begin with coastal resilience, we prioritize integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning to shield our populations from devastating floods and storm surges. This is actively deployed on the ground, in Liberia's updated management plans to protect Monrovia from sea-level rise, and Mozambique's large-scale mangrove buffer expansions designed to withstand intense Indian Ocean tropical cyclones.

6. On sustainable food production, transforming fisheries and aquaculture is paramount to protecting the livelihoods of artisanal fishers and securing aquatic food systems across the continent. In this regard, Mauritania is committed to monitoring marine temperature anomalies to adjust seasonal fishing quotas and prevent pelagic stock collapse.
7. Furthermore, regarding blue carbon ecosystems, restoring mangroves and seagrass beds offers immense dual-benefits. Nigeria is deploying remote sensing across the Niger Delta, Guinea is prioritizing extensive seagrass meadows, and both the Seychelles and Mauritius are legally integrating seagrass carbon accounting into national inventories via blue bonds.
8. However, we must also confront realities transcending adaptation. African nations are already facing severe Loss and Damage resulting in non-economic losses to our cultural heritage, coastal livelihoods, and ecosystem services. Countries such as the Comoros and Djibouti are investing in the protection and restoration of coral reef ecosystems to reduce coastal vulnerability, buffer against wave action, and safeguard critical coastal infrastructure, including ports.
9. On means of implementation, the truth is that ambition without implementation is an illusion. As highlighted in co-facilitators information note, nearly half of all ocean-related NDC commitments are strictly conditional on external support. This reflects a broader reality facing many African countries where nations have progressively strengthened the ambition of their NDCs, yet the support required to implement these commitments has not kept pace.

10. Therefore, accelerating action requires systematically resolving the missing enabling conditions:

- Crucially, on financial enablers, existing climate finance is simply not accessible or fit-for-purpose for long-term marine projects. We need predictable, public concessional finance and dedicated channels that lower the risk for capital deployment.
- On the technical front, methodological hurdles continue to stall our countries potential for Blue carbon projects and we must overcome this by establishing robust baseline data integration within national greenhouse gas inventories.
- And finally, regarding institutional and regulatory enablers, we must close data gaps by investing in ocean observation networks and multi-hazard early warning systems, while simultaneously eliminating interministerial silos and resolving fragmented governance over marine resources.

11. In conclusion, the AGN calls on this Dialogue to serve as a practical, facilitative and a problem-solving platform. Accordingly, we will underscore the need for three priority actions:

- First, we must foster strong, operational synergies with the upcoming 2026 SCF Forum on Financing Climate Action in Water Systems and the Ocean to systematically dismantle structural financial barriers.
- Second, any new technical guidance or reporting frameworks must respect the no-additional-burden principle for developing countries.
- Finally, we need a structured, multi-year roadmap aligned with the Paris Agreement cycle to ensure that the outcomes of this Dialogue are directly mainstreamed into negotiated decisions at COP31.

12.Co-Facilitators, our countries stand ready with our ambitious commitments, but the global financial and technical architecture must evolve to meet us on the shores of implementation.

Thank you!