

The COP 25 Presidency and the incoming COP 26 Presidency Informal Consultation on Ocean and Climate

Introduction

In 2019, Chile hosted the 'Blue COP', COP25, in Madrid. Decision 1/CP.25 included the first ever mandate on ocean, requesting the SBSTA Chair convene a dialogue on the ocean and climate to consider how to strengthen mitigation and adaptation action.

Prior to the Dialogue, the SBSTA chair published an [Information Note](#)¹ summarising the submissions on the Dialogue from Parties and non-state actors, and outlining where the ocean is currently considered within the existing UNFCCC architecture and across other UN processes.

The Dialogue took place virtually on [2-3 December 2020](#), and in April 2021 the SBSTA Chair published an [Informal Summary Report](#) of the Dialogue discussions, fulfilling the 1/CP.25 mandate and marking an important step forward in considering the ocean's place in UNFCCC.

The COP 25 Presidency and the incoming COP 26 Presidency welcome the publication of the report and we are delighted to be working together with the SBSTA Chair to host an informal consultation to allow Parties and non-Party stakeholders to exchange views on the next steps.

During the informal consultation there will be a roundtable discussion allowing participants to express their priorities for addressing the ocean and climate nexus following the publication of the Summary Report. This will be a platform to discuss views from participants on how to continue momentum from the Ocean Dialogue towards meaningful, real world action on the ocean-climate nexus. We welcome suggestions for specific and practical actions that can drive progress towards shared objectives.

Discussion Questions

An extract from the summary report (Key Messages, page 5) is included in the Annex. The questions below are intended as a guide for discussion. Participants are encouraged to use them as a guide to their intervention, focusing on elements of greatest importance to them:

- Recognising the role of UNFCCC and COP26, what should be the next steps and priorities for addressing the ocean-climate nexus following the publication of the Summary Report?
- What specific actions would you like to have international consensus to move forward in strengthening action under the UNFCCC?
- What specific international actions would you like consensus on outside of the UNFCCC to address the ocean-climate nexus?

¹ SBSTA Summary Report https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/OD_InformationNote.pdf

Annex I: Key messages from the informal Summary Report

The ocean is a fundamental part of the climate system and the global response to climate change.

Ocean action and climate action are intrinsically linked and must be strengthened through breaking down silos, integration and collaboration.

To date, the ocean has been a critical buffer against climate change but tipping points are being reached and ocean risk is increasing.

Science provides the basis for understanding the action needed and must be strengthened in parallel with action moving forward.

The ocean provides multiple untapped and powerful opportunities to mitigate and adapt to climate change, provided environmental and social safeguards are met.

Protecting and restoring nature is fundamental for resilience. Action requires the participation of all voices.

Ways forward could incorporate strengthened action related to both process (under the UNFCCC and the UN) and practice (at the national level), as well as international financial support for strengthened action. In particular, future efforts should aim to:

A. Strengthen action under the UNFCCC

- Elevate and strengthen the profile and consideration of the ocean across existing UNFCCC processes
- Support action at the national level, including through ambitious NDCs
- Address gaps and needs in relation to ocean and climate knowledge and action under the UNFCCC process
- Include the ocean in the assessment of collective progress and in the global stocktake
- Catalyse action on and continue to include the ocean in activities under the UNFCCC, recognizing the ocean dialogue as a first step

B. Strengthen action across the United Nations

- Recognize and amplify synergies, complementarities and collective efforts across the UN
- Support mainstreaming of coherent action across biodiversity, ocean and climate change agendas
- Strengthen cooperation and linkages across relevant frameworks and agreements at the international and regional level
- Build ocean and climate change action as a cross-cutting element across the global regulatory framework
- Improve national coordination of action and reporting under processes and conventions across the UN system

C. Strengthen action at the national level

- Promote understanding that climate action equals ocean action and vice versa, especially in low-lying coastal areas and SIDS
- Invest in ocean science and monitoring
- Increase climate ambition inclusive of the ocean, including in NDCs and NAPs
- Develop and/or strengthen integrated national policies for ocean and climate action
- Strengthen leadership at the national, regional and local level

D. Strengthen finance and other cross-cutting support

- Align global finance to support ocean and climate action
- Mobilise understanding and resources to ensure climate investment includes ocean investment
- Invest in ocean and climate action that is biodiversity-neutral and, ideally, biodiversity-positive
- Overcome knowledge gaps to create coherent policies and invest in reforms at different geographical scales
- Facilitate engagement between the public and private sector
- Develop technical guidelines, criteria and/or practical guides for accessing finance
- Develop and implement approaches for innovative financing structures and instruments
- Increase cross-sectoral capacity-building