

UNFCCC ocean and climate change dialogue 2025

Panel 3 - Ocean-climate-biodiversity synergies

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Statement by DOALOS

Guiding questions:

**Topic 3:
Ocean-climate-
biodiversity
synergies**

5. How can the outcomes of UNOC best contribute to the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus under the UNFCCC process?

6. How can the dialogue support Parties in the early ratification and implementation of the BBNJ agreement in its different sections including the establishment of ABMTs and MPAs?

Cross-cutting

7. What are the key financing instruments and sources for the Parties to implement ocean-based action in the new NDCs? To which extent do you believe existing climate finance is accessible for ocean-related strategies?

8. How to enhance access to ocean science, integrating traditional and local knowledge systems, and strengthening capacity for ocean research, especially in developing countries, for tackling climate change and promoting marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable use?

9. How should a three-to-five-year roadmap for the Ocean and Climate Dialogue be structured to facilitate long-term planning and ensure a coherent and progressive addressing of relevant topics over time?

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, I wish to thank you, Co-facilitators, for the opportunity to participate in this important ocean and climate change dialogue.

The ocean, marine biodiversity, and the climate system are intrinsically interconnected components of the Earth system. Science has provided a growing body of robust, peer-reviewed evidence attesting to these interdependencies. Science has been translated into the language of policy-making through authoritative assessments, including IPCC reports, World Ocean Assessments, and the reports of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The work under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) is also stimulating ocean science and knowledge generation. Of course, more needs to be done and the One Ocean Science Congress, held just before the 3rd UN Ocean Conference in Nice last week, called for significantly increased investment in ocean research, monitoring, and modelling.

The effective participation of experts from developing States and the inclusion of traditional and local knowledge systems are essential to these efforts, with a view to ensuring comprehensiveness and

representativeness. To this end, capacity-building programmes need to be adequately supported.

This body of knowledge informs multilateral negotiations and outcomes. The most recent example is the adoption last week of the Third United Nations Ocean Conference Political Declaration, entitled “Our ocean, our future: united for urgent action.” The declaration acknowledges that the ocean is facing a global emergency, as it is severely affected by the cumulative impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.

It underscores the vital role of the ocean in climate mitigation and in supporting adaptation and resilience, while warning that this role is being undermined. It calls for enhanced and coordinated global action to minimize the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on the ocean, its biodiversity, and coastal communities that depend on it.

The Declaration highlights the need for the full and effective implementation of relevant global instruments, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Several mechanisms established under these instruments—most notably this ocean and climate change dialogue—are recognized as directly relevant to the realization of SDG 14.

In addition, the Declaration affirms the commitment to address climate change-related sea level rise, recognizing its disproportionate impact on SIDS, LDCs and coastal communities. It acknowledges key international efforts and legal developments to address this issue.

Finally, the Declaration stresses the urgent need to scale up financial mechanisms and streamline financial mechanisms to support ocean action. At or around UNOC3, several financial commitments and initiatives were launched to help States implement SDG 14, many of which will support ocean-based climate action.

Turning to the Agreement 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 (BBNJ Agreement), as of today 50 States and the EU have ratified it, bringing us closer to the 60 ratifications needed for the Agreement to enter into force.

The Agreement acknowledges the urgency of addressing biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation caused by climate change. It calls for ecosystem resilience-building, including to climate stressors, and maintenance and restoration of ecosystem integrity, particularly in relation to carbon cycling services that support climate regulation.

The Agreement also emphasizes that the establishment of area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, must be informed by climate resilience objectives. Capacity-building initiatives and technology transfer under the Agreement are expected to include components that address the adverse effects of climate change, ensuring that all States have the tools and knowledge to adapt.

Cooperation and coordination among relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies are at the heart of the BBNJ Agreement. Parties to the Agreement are required to cooperate, promote coherence, and participate constructively in decision-making processes across these frameworks and bodies. The Preparatory Commission established to prepare for the entry into force of the Agreement will discuss these issues during its second session, scheduled to take place in New York, 18–29 August 2025. The

Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Agreement, which will meet no later than one year after its entry into force, will then establish the necessary mechanisms to support such cooperation and coordination. Considering the synergies with the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement in these discussions will ensure early alignment between climate and BBNJ frameworks.

The Agreement also establishes a financial mechanism to assist developing States Parties in its implementation. This mechanism consists of a voluntary trust fund, a special fund, and the Global Environment Facility trust fund. Additionally, the Conference of the Parties may also consider the possibility of establishing additional funds as part of the financial mechanism.

Looking ahead, this Dialogue can play an important role in providing practical guidance, including on how to turn high level policy recommendations into deliverables to be considered under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, and beyond.

It can continue to support information exchange on how relevant instruments can reinforce each other in support of healthy, resilient, and sustainable ocean, biodiversity and climate systems. For example, it may provide guidance on how the Paris Agreement's goals can be supported through the implementation of the BBNJ

Agreement, including its provisions on the establishment of climate resilient area-based management tools, including marine protected areas.

UN-Oceans can also contribute to promoting coherence in the implementation of UN mandates related to the ocean, biodiversity and climate change. UN-Oceans is an inter-agency mechanism which includes organizations of the United Nations system with ocean related mandates and the International Seabed Authority - and I note that the UNFCCC Secretariat is a member. By regularly sharing ongoing and planned activities of participating organizations, it can assist in identifying possible areas for collaboration and synergy, and to facilitate inter-agency information exchange.

Let me conclude by thanking you again, Co-facilitators, for the opportunity to be here today.
