

**SUMMARY OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABLE OCEAN INITIATIVE GLOBAL DIALOGUE WITH REGIONAL SEAS ORGANIZATIONS AND REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES ON ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: 10-13 APRIL 2018**

The second meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations (RSOs) and Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) on Accelerating Progress toward the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development Goals convened from 10-13 April 2018 in Seoul, Republic of Korea, under the theme, “Unlocking the potential for transformational change towards sustainability.” The meeting was chaired by Co-Chairs Dixon Waruinge, Nairobi Convention Secretariat, and Stefán Ásmundsson, Government of Iceland.

The meeting brought together representatives of RSOs, RFBs, and relevant UN/international organizations and initiatives as well as experts from national governments and agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The objectives of the meeting included, to: hear updates on developments since the first meeting of the SOI Global Dialogue in 2016; learn about cross-sectoral cooperation at the regional scale; discuss emerging initiatives on regional ocean governance; and to share lessons learned and case studies related to regional cooperation. Participants were challenged to work in break-out groups to develop and report back concrete options on several key issues, including: enhancing application of the ecosystem approach/ecosystem-based management (EBM); strengthening effectiveness of area-based management tools; preventing, reducing and mitigating the impacts of pollution, including marine debris; and strengthening monitoring and data/information sharing in support of scientific assessment of the status and trends of marine biodiversity and fisheries resources.

The final morning of the meeting was devoted to the Partnership Networking Café, where 17 different organizations staffed tables to facilitate informal discussions, exchange information, and explore possible future collaborations. In the afternoon, the Secretariat distributed a draft summary of the meeting results, the ‘Seoul Outcomes Plus +2’, and invited participants to provide input in the coming week. The Co-Chairs closed the meeting at 12:59pm.

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOI AND THE GLOBAL DIALOGUE**

**SOI:** The Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) arose from the 10th Conference of Parties of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2010, which emphasized the need for training and capacity-building of developing country Parties to address the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. Recognizing this need, the CBD Secretariat, with the support of the Governments of Japan and France and other partners, established the SOI as a global platform to build partnerships and facilitate dialogue to address capacity needs in support of countries’ efforts to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Specific actions under the SOI have included: bringing together different sectors to share experiences; regional capacity-building workshops to outline opportunities and pathways to improve coordination between fisheries

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Participants make the Korean finger heart symbol during the group photo

He noted that less than half of the regional bodies and management organizations have a regulatory body and concluded that cooperation and properly managed mechanisms can lead to inclusive environmental, social and economic development.

#### **MEETING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **MEETING BACKGROUND: Evolving Global Ocean Policy-Scope: Developments Since the First SOI Dialogue:**

Noting we are connected to each other through marine life, Lee reported on activities since the first meeting, including activities to highlight the results of the first meeting to many global and regional fora, and highlighted that only 1,000 days remain to meet the 2020 Aichi Targets. She emphasized the need to translate long-term thinking into short term actions by: describing a vision and ambitions; creating pathways with stepping stones; and formulating concrete actions.

Yoshinobu Takei, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), drew attention to the ocean-related SDGs that must be met by either 2020 or 2025. Highlighting outcomes from the UN Ocean Conference, which he said raised global consciousness of important ocean-related challenges and laid a roadmap for ambitious work, he described follow-up actions, including the appointment of Special Envoy for the Ocean, Peter Thomson. On the voluntary commitments that resulted from the UN Ocean Conference, he reported that nine multi-stakeholder communities of action were launched and are sharing best practices, seeking synergies and identifying potential gaps.



Jihyun Lee, CBD, and Yoshinobu Takei, UN DESA

Michele Ameri, UN Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UN DOALOS), provided an overview of the legal framework related to the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Ameri cited developments, such as the UN General Assembly Resolution 69/292 to develop a legally binding instrument on conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity. He shared updates from 1st World Ocean Assessment (WOA) on the state of marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, and progress made to produce the 2nd WOA over the 2017-2020 cycle of work.

Helen Davies, UNEP, shared outcomes from UNEA-3, underscoring evidence for high-level support for the SOI. She explained that under the theme of 'Towards a Pollution-Free Planet,' the Assembly prioritized actions to *inter alia*: strengthen and enhance regional ocean governance to advance implementation of the SDGs; increase resilience of coral reefs; support circular economies; reduce marine litter and micro-plastics; and restore water-related ecosystems.

Mannini said the main mechanism to organize cooperative management of fishing activities is through fisheries bodies, such as Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs). He reviewed the establishment of RFBs over time, describing variability in mandates, scope, framework, and economic conditions. He emphasized implementation of RFMO performance review and the RFB Secretariats' Network as a tool for regional and global cooperation.

Wenxi Zhu, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) reported on efforts related to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), highlighting, *inter alia*: transforming knowledge systems to support sustainable development; elucidating cumulative impacts of ocean stressors; bolstering ocean observing systems and information exchange; accelerating capacity building, including transfer of marine technology, training and education; and empowering policy and decision makers with scientific solutions.

Participants discussed, *inter alia*, the: ability of intergovernmental organizations to submit nominations to the pool of experts for the WOA; role of regional organizations in implementation of the Aichi Targets; interlinkages among SDGs, especially sustainable consumption and production in the context of the ocean; need to incorporate RSOs and RFBs in global assessments and status reports; progress in applying the criteria for Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs); need for consistent country positions across UN processes; and, the benefits to data sharing between RSOs and RFBs.

**MEETING OBJECTIVES:** Lee underscored the goal of the SOI to share experiences and lessons learned. She explored opportunities to produce concrete ideas to further synergies and cross-sectoral cooperation, looking forward to hearing from participants on how various regional bodies interact and contribute to global processes, and how cross-sectoral cooperation can strengthen pre-existing mandates.

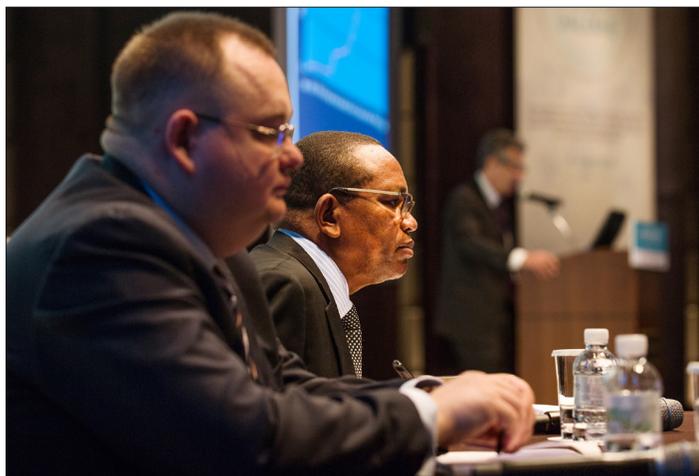
### **PROGRESS REPORT OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN SINCE THE FIRST SOI GLOBAL DIALOGUE**

#### **CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION AT THE REGIONAL SCALE AND INPUTS TO RELEVANT GLOBAL PROCESSES:**

On Tuesday afternoon, Moderator Darius Campbell, North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission, invited panelists to present experiences of cross-sectoral cooperation at the regional scale, highlighting best practices and challenges.

Waruige highlighted an agreement with Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission that promotes sustainable utilization of living marine resources and shares goals and objectives with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) on conservation and protection. Through continued support from the Government of Sweden, he outlined plans to promote ocean governance and sustainable blue growth through high-level policy dialogue coordination; multi-stakeholder engagement in marine spatial planning (MSP); engagement of poor coastal communities; and enhancement of regional capacity on adaptation to environmental variability.

Patrick Debels, Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project (CLME+), illustrated how different intergovernmental organizations with their own mandates work in the same



Co-chairs **Stefán Ásmundsson**, Government of Iceland, and **Dixon Waruige**, Nairobi Convention



L-R: **Kosi Latu**, SPREP; **Lev Neretin**, NOWPAP, **Takehiro Nakamura**, UNEP; and **Piero Mannini**, FAO

geographic region. He presented how the second phase of the project, supported by GEF, is considering unsustainable fisheries, pollution and habitat degradation. He discussed how this project can inspire other regions by helping to produce guidance materials, identifying as a key output the State of Marine Ecosystems and Associated Economies (SOME), a collaborative reporting mechanism.

Kosi Latu, Director-General, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), noted the Pacific's susceptibility to impacts of climate change and observed that the smallest, most isolated countries in the world have some of the largest exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Connie Donato-Hunt, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), highlighted the need for integrated ocean science, describing efforts to harmonize and streamline strategies, policies and reports. Bradley Ammon Wiley, Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), described collaborative efforts with other RFBs, such as: pan-Pacific stock assessment of bigeye tuna; and a harmonized database to support coordinated management. Fernando Félix Grijalva, Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, described cross-sectoral cooperation related to sustainable use, capacity building, scientific information exchange; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and financing opportunities. Craig Loveridge, South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization, noted the need for models on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME); and highlighted efforts to develop comprehensive risk assessments for bycatch and species of concern, such as sharks and rays.

Abou Bamba, the Abidjan Convention, outlined how collaboration can: support joint achievement of Aichi Targets and SDGs, particularly in a region with scarce resources; link conservation issues with development objectives; and create a baseline of data for policy elaboration. He reflected on experiences in scaling up pollution control, such as developing norms and standards for regulation of oil and gas, and protecting species and habitats through the Abidjan Aquatic Partnership. He concluded with suggestions for the SOI Global Dialogue to support strengthened ocean governance, such as: preparing a new formal framework for cooperation; sharing successful experiences and lessons learned; and supporting fundraising for implementation.

On cooperation in the Mediterranean Sea, Nakamura and Mannini reported on objectives and milestones under the Mediterranean Action Plan, including adopting an ecosystem approach roadmap for regional implementation of SDG 14. They highlighted work of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), including EBM of fish stocks; efforts to address impacts of climate change, ocean acidification and pollution; and area-based management measures. Iryna Makarenko, Black Sea Commission, highlighted cooperative efforts with GFCM, such as harmonizing indicators for progress on goals.

Lev Neretin, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP), reported progress of the medium-term strategy 2018-2020, which aims to develop regional action plans on coastal and marine biodiversity and produce the 3rd State of Marine and Environment report.

Mannini, reporting on behalf of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME), explained challenges in cooperation within the region, citing exposure to geo-political sensitivities. He outlined the Memorandum of Understanding between ROPME and RECOFI that has entered in force and covers indicators of progress for four years.

Wojciech Wawrzynski, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), demonstrated the evolution of scientific assessments aimed to generate evidence and advice for environmental policy, sharing examples of fisheries and ecosystem overviews. He reported that the next generation of assessments will address climate change, ecosystem services and social and economic objectives. Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary, the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), provided an overview of a regionally integrated assessment of the region, containing 30 core indicators. She explained that the first version has received substantial input from consultations and will be finalized in the near future, noting the challenge to make use of the report, once finalized.

Campbell provided an update on the collective arrangement between NEAFC and the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic centered on common interests such as sharks.

During ensuing discussions, participants, shared *inter alia*: practical cross-sectoral partnerships experiences from other regions; influence of regional cooperation at the national level; and opportunities to overcome regional weaknesses, such as scientific assessments.

#### EMERGING INITIATIVES RELATED TO STRENGTHENING REGIONAL OCEAN GOVERNANCE:

Moderator Malgaj noted recent country commitments and projects in the area of supporting improved ocean governance. Nakamura described ten case studies on cross-sectoral institutional cooperation and integrated ocean policies for delivery of ocean-related SDGs, including on: integrated policies; fisheries; shipping; and a river basin.

On building scientific partnerships with large marine ecosystems (LMEs) programmes, Ivica Trumbic, IOC-UNESCO, contextualized that LMEs that are always transboundary in nature, contain large amounts of biodiversity, and contribute



Barbara Neumann, IASS, addresses the audience

ecosystem services valued at US\$3 trillion per year. He explained that LMEs:LEARN aims to support networking, learning and exchange among LME projects in order to: improve governance; establish a global and regional network of partnerships; synthesize and incorporate knowledge to build capacity; and better apply science in decision making through communication, dissemination and outreach.

Barbara Neumann, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, reported that the Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance emerged from a voluntary commitment made during the UN Ocean Conference, spanning 2017-2020. She outlined its aim to: establish participatory, multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral dialogue to exchange and advance knowledge; facilitate integrated ocean governance approaches, cooperation and coordination in regions with collective strategies and new approaches; and assemble a series of workshops and side events

During discussions on governance, participants mentioned: development of regional guidelines or targets, monitoring and indicators, for example joint work on updating Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) protocols in the Black Sea; challenges of replicability due to region-specific contexts; need to close gaps in priority areas; and the number of countries with integrated ocean governance framework. Participants also commented on opportunities to improve coordination in regions receiving support from donors in order to optimize resources and facilitate implementation of SDGs and the Aichi Targets.



A participant poses a question during discussions



Fred Kingston, NAFO

### SHARING LESSONS LEARNED AND CASE-STUDIES IN ADDRESSING CRITICAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN REGIONAL-SCALE COOPERATION

On Wednesday morning, Co-chair Ásmundsson, introduced the session and explained the aim was to collect specific feedback from discussions in breakout sessions. He further clarified that discussion topics would be split between: enhancing the application of the ecosystem approach and strengthening area-based management tools.

**TOPIC 1: ENHANCING APPLICATION OF THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH/ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT:** Fred Kingston, Executive Secretary, Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), shared experiences in developing and operationalizing an ecosystem approach framework, highlighting challenges in VMEs and coordination with offshore oil and gas operations. He outlined work underway, such as applying NAFO's Scientific Council input to further develop the ecosystem approach to fisheries with additional production modeling and multi-species assessments, as well as production of summary sheets to communicate advice to managers.

Kristina Gjerde, Sargasso Sea Commission, provided a view of enhancing the ecosystem approach through cross-sectoral cooperation, sharing examples of the Commission's progress,



Kristina Gjerde, Sargasso Sea Commission

such as catalyzing major public-private partnerships, advancing and compiling scientific knowledge, and increasing political will. She highlighted specific challenges, including lack of access to scientific advice on a global level, and posed the challenge to move beyond development of national biodiversity strategies and actions plans in order to produce regional assessments and action plans.

**Break-out groups:** During discussions, participants noted: an overall increase in positive political attitudes in integrated ocean policy development, potentially due to drivers such as the blue economy; examples of joint management approaches, as seen in with tuna; and challenges in filling mandates in regions without any historical experience.

On applying the ecosystem approach in RSOs and RFBs, participants highlighted that, *inter alia*:

- RSOs have no enforcement mechanisms while many RFBs have management measures that are enforceable;
- frameworks are not linked to various bodies for effective management;
- non-binding decisions pose challenges to effective implementation; and
- there is a question of how, in addition to these bodies, other bodies and initiatives addressing environmental and fisheries issues fit in.

On cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination, participants identified challenges in data monitoring and communication, and noted the:

- need to increase capacity, particularly in data sharing at the regional level; and
- improve collaboration through data compatibility across sectors.

On different legal, policy and scientific means to embed the ecosystem approach into the operations of regional bodies, participants identified, *inter alia*:

- lack of consistent understanding of what constitutes an ecosystem approach;
- proposals for an integrated ecosystem approach to management, as opposed to ecosystem approach frameworks;
- potential for gaps where ecosystem boundaries transcend national and regional boundaries; and
- evidence of limited political will to execute the mandates of ecosystem approaches.

Examples shared on application of the ecosystem approach included: Southern Africa orchestrating maritime surveillance and security by sharing capacity and assets; Western Indian Ocean where RFBs and RSOs collected, standardized, and shared data to support decision making in a collaborative way, achieved through a voluntary commitment; and the Caribbean, where an ecosystem approach led to improved monitoring and reporting.

**TOPIC 2: STRENGTHENING EFFECTIVENESS OF AREA-BASED MANAGEMENT TOOLS:** Stankiewicz presented on MSP in the Baltic Sea, saying a regional approach can improve: consultations and stakeholder involvement; identification of economic impacts; and access to the best available scientific knowledge. She described a collaboration between two regional frameworks, HELCOM and the Vision



Edward Kleverlaan, Independent Consultant

and Strategies around the Baltic Sea, that resulted in assessment of potential cumulative impacts, harmonized data sets, and recognition of transboundary issues.

Edward Kleverlaan outlined the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) safety-based tools, focusing on Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSA), an IMO designation that provides special protection because of an area's ecological, socio-economic or scientific significance and which may be vulnerable to damage from international shipping. He highlighted the potential for regional bodies to support use of PSSAs by: identifying sensitive areas; supporting proponents with good data; developing appropriate national legislation; implementing detection and policing patrols; and reporting on effectiveness of the tool.

**Break-out groups:** During discussions on area-based management tools, participants emphasized different mandates between RSOs and RFBs; stressed the importance of harmonizing data; and identified concrete options for increased collaboration.

On applying area-based management tools in RSOs and RFBs, participants observed, *inter alia*:

- RFBs generally have a legal mandate and capacity to manage areas in the high seas only;
- RFBs' mandates are largely species-based, whereas RSOs have broader mandates;
- MSP tends to be developed at the national level, but is often coordinated regionally;
- variability in access to scientific expertise;
- lack of information and global consensus undermines area-based management; and
- maturity of an organization affects its ability to use area-based tools.

On potential improvements to cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination, participants noted:

- RSOs could be included on RFMO commissions;
- extension of mandates of RSOs to high seas could increase their impact;
- indicators should be developed at national levels and harmonized beyond national boundaries;
- opportunity for the establishment of a regional or global database on existing area-based management tools;
- acknowledgement of wasted resources from overlapping mandates;

- Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources should send their experts to participate in other processes; and
- scientific basis is lacking for some MSPs.

On reporting to global processes on regional-scale efforts for area-based management, key points included:

- RSOs can help with coordination and reporting;
- the need to focus on existing work and effectiveness of existing processes; and
- need for more robust data collection for fisheries.

Examples shared on strengthening effectiveness of area-based management included: efforts to extend mandates into the high seas; differences in accessing scientific information in the North Pacific compared to North East Atlantic; efforts by Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) to standardize data collection; the IATTC ecosystem mandate; and the need to address plastic pollution impacts in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

### TOPIC 3: PREVENTING, REDUCING AND MITIGATING THE IMPACTS OF POLLUTION, INCLUDING MARINE DEBRIS, ON MARINE BIODIVERSITY AND FISHERIES:

On Wednesday afternoon, Latu shared the Cleaner Pacific 2025: Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy, underscoring the importance of thoroughly understanding the issues in order to identify appropriate and effective strategies. He described a cross-sectoral collaboration among RFBs, scientific bodies and RSOs, where data was shared to improve understanding about the origin and composition of marine litter. He noted challenges in resourcing commitments already in place, indicating opportunities for the private sector to “engineer new solutions” to plastics.

Malgaj presented European efforts to accelerate a transition to a circular economy and achieve good environmental status, including the preparation of legal instruments to achieve the target of 30% reduction by 2020 of marine litter found on EU beaches. He illustrated the need to develop threshold values of marine litter as a foundation for policies. Malgaj shared efforts to incentivize behavioral changes to avoid dumping of waste, and to harmonize methodologies to link industry output and extend producer responsibilities.



Kosi Latu, SPREP

**Break-out groups:** On specific requests and priorities from fisheries or biodiversity perspectives to be delivered by regional bodies when dealing with pollution, participants highlighted, *inter alia*:

- an example from the Indian Ocean region demonstrating collaboration among a science-based NGO, Parties of the Nairobi Convention, and RFBs, which resulted in improved recognition of impacts from marine litter and the ability to attract GEF funding;
- the lack of a clear agenda among RFBs regarding information on marine pollution;
- opportunities to coordinate mandates with existing freshwater conventions;
- the role of regional bodies to uptake international initiatives, build momentum and global awareness, and engage countries; and
- the need to engage the private sector.

On the discussion of specific mandates, expertise, experience, and capacities that RSOs and RFBs currently possess, participants identified, *inter alia*:

- a call for a comprehensive identification of sources of pollution to establish baselines and threshold values that can be translated into guidance;
- the opportunity for RSOs to provide “soft enforcement,” such as publishing data that identify causes of pollution and suggest mitigation measures; and
- the challenge in recognizing that, despite certain national efforts to address pollution, global trends continue to rise.

On how cross cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination can improve, participants cited, *inter alia*:

- the potential of the emerging process on biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) as a coordination opportunity;
- the need to ensure investments and resources are applied where there is already impact from pollution;
- potential for the use of MSP approaches to improve integration across sectors; and
- the role of local NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) to provide data from the local to the global level, with subsequent transfer of data regionally.

On regional mechanisms supporting upstream actions, participants suggested, *inter alia*:

- that RSOs are better able to address such measures;
- the need for harmonization of policies and regulations to mobilize and leverage available resources from institutional bodies;
- that RFBs may have a longer history of interest in cumulative impacts of climate change; and
- the challenge of translating information into management measures for RFBs and RSOs.

#### **TOPIC 4: STRENGTHENING MONITORING AND DATA/INFORMATION SHARING IN SUPPORT OF SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF MARINE BIODIVERSITY AND FISHERIES RESOURCES:**

Wawrzynski identified governance failures as a main cause of degradation to coastal and marine areas, describing the development of an ICES ocean governance toolkit to create a harmonized set of tools for comprehensive governance assessment. Based on case studies and extensive literature review, the toolkit is intended to: be user-friendly for users at regional levels; allow analysis of legal mandates; and help identify gaps and overlaps. He highlighted the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance, a tri-lateral working group focused on science support for inter-regional legislation.

Nic Bax, GOOS, emphasized the need for improved baselines, sustained standardized monitoring, and improved access to data. He identified “essential ocean variables” as a way to help prioritize work, calling for: broad agreement about how to monitor the world’s oceans and standardize data streams; making use of the best available resources; movement away from repackaging aggregated data to report against global targets; and improved and sustained approaches to capacity development and technology transfer.

**Break-out groups:** On current mandates and capacities to effectively conduct scientific assessment and monitoring at the regional scale, participants highlighted, *inter alia*:

- scientific assessments are mostly national, not regional, processes;
- some RFBs have to limit what data can be shared; and
- RFBs have legal mandates for scientific assessment, while most RSOs monitor global and regional measures related to marine biodiversity.

On potential improvements through cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination, participants identified the need to:



Break-out discussion groups brought participants together to share perspectives on regional cross-sectoral collaboration



Nic Bax, Global Ocean Observing System

- secure agreement at the national level before exchanging data regionally;
- standardize data collection methods;
- encourage data sharing among RSOs and RFBs where competencies overlap;
- make regional data portals more accessible; and
- provide real-time access to data.

On regional contributions to the WOA and measuring the progress against global targets and goals, participants discussed:

- inclusion of socio-economic issues;
- development of groups of experts for each chapter to ensure good regional representation;
- RFBs should nominate experts to the WOA Pool of Experts;
- “soft” agreements may help progress, where binding agreements are not possible;
- use of fishing vessels to collect environmental data;
- areas with limited capacity need to be represented by experts familiar with the region; and
- the need for financial flows to regional bodies to facilitate assessments.

### CO-CHAIRS’ SUMMARY

On Thursday morning, Co-Chair Ásmundsson explained that break-out discussion groups were organized by region and invited explicit examples of cooperation and coordination that contribute to achieving global goals and targets. Lee introduced the zero-draft outline, “Seoul Outcome Plus +2,” clarifying intention to: support capacity building for the achievement of the Aichi Targets and the SDGs; mainstream biodiversity issues across sectors; and attract and mobilize additional financial resources to support working together on the global level. She noted that presentations, key messages and discussions will be compiled for inclusion, challenging participants to bring forward concrete, innovative and specific advice.

### IDENTIFYING WAYS AND MEANS TO PUT THE ‘SEOUL OUTCOMES’ INTO CONCRETE PRACTICE AND TO FURTHER ENHANCE REGIONAL CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION

Joseph Appiott, CBD Secretariat



Joseph Appiott, CBD Secretariat



Patrick Debels, CLME+

feedback on: a common vision; associated major milestones and pathways; thematic issues of common interest; key actors and their roles; collaborative activities; modalities to engage players within regions; and three-year priority actions to create enabling conditions.

**Break-out groups:** On Thursday afternoon, Co-Chair Ásmundsson invited the break-out groups to report the results of regional group discussions.

Debels, reporting on behalf of the Wider Caribbean and Central America+ (Atlantic and Pacific), shared a vision that envisages a healthy environment which supports the well-being and livelihoods of people, with provision for the valuing of ecosystem good and services. He referenced enabling actors, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the LME community, which help to mainstream EBM, and underscored how governance catalyzes EBM. Debels identified key thematic areas: habitats and biodiversity; unsustainable fisheries; pollution; and the cross-cutting issues of climate and societal change. He emphasized identifying root challenges, such as weakness in governance, lack of technical and financial capacity, and awareness and access to data and information. Linking root causes to milestones, he highlighted creating capacity to implement EBM and ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) through defining operational objectives and performances indicators; and the integration and institutionalization of the SOMEE reporting mechanism to promote a healthy science policy interface.

On possible collaborative activities to address thematic issues, he listed *inter alia*: valuation of ecosystem goods and services; scientific capacity building to help implement EBM and EAF; and establishment of regional fora and exchange mechanisms to implement ICZM and MSP across the region. Debels identified specific short-term priorities, including: continued national-level cross-sectoral dialogue; development of an integrative reporting mechanism; consolidation of knowledge on connectivity in context of the establishment of networks of MPAs and areas for sustainable fisheries; and development of research strategies to support EBM and EAF in the region.



Connie Donato-Hunt, SPC

Donato-Hunt, reporting on behalf of the South-Central Pacific+ region, reflected that the group used elements from SDG 14, the Aichi Targets and the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape to develop a common vision. She underscored the need to integrate information to address the common relevant challenges of climate change, marine pollution, bycatch, reduction of fish stocks, ocean acidification, seabed mining, marine transport, and connectivity between EEZs and Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

On discussions of specific milestones, Donato-Hunt listed pre-existing commitments with 2020 deadlines, explaining that activities aimed to optimize the ability to meet these existing targets. She underscored accessing existing collaborative opportunities so that the “joint partnerships bring about joint outcomes,” building on implementation in a joint manner. She illustrated this point with by connecting SPREP’s broad voluntary commitment for science organizations involved in oceans to SPC development of a Pacific Community Centre for Ocean Science platform. She shared the intention to create a Pacific regional ocean-science conference, followed by an evidence-into-practice conference. Noting the conferences could coincide with the kick-off of the Decade for Ocean Science and/or the 2nd UN Ocean Conference, they could help identify key gaps areas, build knowledge in those areas, and leverage the level of energy in the region to get to the next level of implementation.

Neretin reported for the Northwest Pacific region, summarizing the common vision for regional cooperation as healthy ecosystems and their sustainable use. He noted that national capacities exist, however the region lacks a clear definition on the values of marine and coastal biodiversity conservation and use. On regional thematic issues, he identified common challenges such as habitat degradation, pollution and climate change, noting that many transboundary species in the region are globally relevant. He underscored regional opportunities for cooperation, including: alignment and coordination in producing ecosystem status reports, emphasizing accessible language; issue-oriented data collection and sharing; and dialogue on national and regional targets and indicators. He underscored potential milestones for 2020-2023, including: ensuring each regional institution has marine biodiversity-



Abou Bamba, Abidjan Convention

related expertise; supporting regional inputs to WOA2; aligning regionally agreed targets and indicators with Aichi Targets and SDGs; and including organizations beyond RSOs and RFBs in at least one region-specific dialogue, potentially under the CBD SOI umbrella.

For the Indian Ocean and Africa Group, Bamba, shared a common vision: regional cooperation towards a productive and resilient ocean for the well-being of all. He outlined major milestones, including: identification of existing relevant bodies, competencies, mandates and information gaps; establishment of regional or sub-regional frameworks for collaboration, which SOI could facilitate; agreement on a strategy for communication and ongoing cooperation; development of shared scenarios and targets; and monitoring and evaluation of cooperation. On thematic issues and common interests and concerns, he highlighted “artisanal” fisheries and interactions with other types of fisheries, as well as consideration of relevant FAO guidelines. He referenced the concept of creating “blue wealth” to ensure equitable distribution of ocean resources and benefits.

Bamba differentiated key actors according to roles or thematic issues. On possible collaborative activities, he highlighted exchanging science, building political will, on-the-ground implementation, and sharing experiences and lessons learned, within and between regions. He noted possible modalities, including: support for ongoing projects; coordination of existing networks; a platform to bring together information; capacity building; and an overall framework for a regional dialogue, including periodic regional meetings and exchanges. He identified short-term priorities actions as: establishing an overall regional framework facilitated by SOI; identifying possible financing sources; hold joint meetings of RSO and RFB Secretariats before the next SOI meeting; identifying capacity needs; improving knowledge management; identifying data gaps; and transforming data into useful knowledge. He acknowledged the general issue of the need for better gender balance.

Participants noted regional cooperation on EBSAs between the Caspian Sea and Black Sea region, as well as ecosystem approaches and thematic activities in the Baltic Sea, including those related to fish and seal interactions. Participants noted steps to update the Baltic Sea Action Plan, taking into account the Aichi Targets and SDGs.

### **FURTHER ENHANCING INTER-REGIONAL SHARING OF EXPERIENCES THROUGH THE SOI GLOBAL DIALOGUE**

Nakamura discussed how RSOs and RFBs accelerate progress on achieving the Aichi Targets and SDGs. Recalling that regions are tasked to assist with implementation, he identified lack of clarity on the role of ocean-related regional organizations and encouraged such bodies to establish this role by bringing proposed actions to respective member states. He outlined potential contributions, such as harmonizing national actions among countries sharing a marine ecosystem; and aligning regional strategies with global goals and targets. He underscored the value of conducting “alignment” exercises, sharing the Baltic Action Plan as an example. He explained that actions are often aligned; however, using the same indicators and communicating with member states allows those parties to use the information in their global reporting. He concluded by listing topics for participants to address during the break-out discussions.

**Break-out groups:** Debels, reporting on behalf of the Wider Caribbean and Central America+ (Atlantic and Pacific), said RFMOs are contributing to achieving Aichi Target 6 and SDG 14, including through information provided to DOALOS and FAO, and highlighted GOOS Regional Alliances for providing scientific input. On support for member states’ efforts on goals and targets, he noted: efforts to align strategies with the SDGs; adoption of the LME concept as a way to mobilize resources; and a target for MPAs under the Caribbean Challenge Initiative. On adding value by regional organizations functioning as platforms for monitoring and reviewing progress, he noted that regional bodies’ knowledge on migratory species can help with protection and conservation. For potential inter-regional, inter-sessional activities, he listed: a potential workshop on harmonizing regional integrated reporting; articulating linkages with global processes; and developing a template for regional reporting.

Bax, on behalf of the South and Central Pacific, commented on over-reporting and noted work on harmonizing reports with global requirements. He highlighted the potential to take advantage of and modify existing reporting processes, including those already received by DOALOS. He outlined opportunities to add value, such as helping with harmonizing country reporting and providing aggregated data summaries. Bax identified inter-sessional and inter-regional activities to include: RSOs meeting on an annual basis; and bilateral meetings among fishery bodies. He noted a limited number of collaborative projects and said it wasn’t clear how a direct connection to reporting on SDGs or Aichi Targets would add value to regional organizations or countries, but that regional organizations could provide leadership and scientific management input to improve indicators. Bax listed current challenges, including: lack of information about what countries report and the burden of enhanced engagement for regional organizational with limited resources.

Neretin, for the Northwest Pacific region, said the discussion mostly focused on reporting, noting that some regional organizations have strategies aligned with SDG targets; many frameworks are being revised to account for global indicators; and information collected at the national level goes to FAO. On



Africa and Indian Ocean group in discussion

the need to report more quantitative information, he identified: providing support where national entities are lacking information on transboundary or other technical issues; and ecosystem status reporting aligned with SDGs. Neretin noted lack of consensus on indicators. Additional comments from the group emphasized a focus on implementation over developing reporting mechanisms at the regional level, and the inability of national reports to provide a broader perspective on some issues, such as marine litter.

Mathias Igulu, WIOMSA, reporting on behalf of the Indian Ocean and Africa region, acknowledged progress in implementing global goals and targets, citing examples: the Baltic Sea focus on SDGs and setting of nutrient reduction targets; and efforts in the Western Indian Ocean region to assist countries developing standardized reporting formats and methodologies for Aichi Target 11 and 9. In an example from the Bay of Bengal, he highlighted how a code of conduct for fisheries implemented in 2000 has led to policy harmonization and capacity building efforts, subsequently increasing the implementation of ecosystem-based approaches and progress towards achieving SDG14. On adding value, he reiterated the



Mathias Igulu, WIOMSA



Jihyun Lee, CBD, and Co-chairs **Dixon Waruinge**, Nairobi Convention, and **Stefán Ásmundsson**, Government of Iceland

need for harmonized data, citing the example of eutrophication, which cannot be addressed by any one country, adding that neighboring reporting systems could be beneficial. He concluded by suggesting intersessional activities, such as, improving understanding of actions across the region; sharing lessons; and driving discussions among regional organizations.

#### **PARTNERSHIP NETWORKING CAFÉ**

On Friday morning, 17 organizations participated in the Partnership Networking Café. The event allowed participants to: share experiences and expertise in an informal setting; identify opportunities for future collaborations; provide space for in-depth discussions among participants; and foster dialogue between RSOs and RFBs.

#### **CLOSING PLENARY**

On Friday afternoon, Lee presented the executive summary of the Seoul Outcome Plus+2, noting that comments can be made over the next week. She clarified that the document would be shared widely but that it would not be formally submitted for consideration to the forthcoming meetings of the CBD COP and/or Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) meetings. She appreciated participants' willingness to dive into more concrete issues and make progress on finding more sustainable approaches.

Key draft outcomes included, that participants:

- identified existing complementary capacities, resources and activities within regional organizations to enhance regional cooperation and coordination and support national-level implementation;
- encouraged RSOs and RFBs to consider creating or further developing regional cross-sectoral dialogues to identify areas and modalities of cooperation and collaboration;
- identified linking resources available for organizations and regions most in need of support, such as capacity development and institutional strengthening;
- welcomed the roadmaps, developed through regional group discussions, which identified possible ways and means to put the 'Seoul Outcomes' into concrete practice and to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration at the regional scale; and
- discussed potential inter-sessional activities, with a focus on enhancing the role of regional organizations/bodies in supporting national reporting on global goals.

The Co-chairs and participants expressed their appreciation for the organizers and funders and the Co-chairs closed the meeting at 12:59pm.



Participants pose with copies of the draft Seoul Outcome Plus +2 at the conclusion of the 2nd SOI Global Dialogue

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Organizational Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an International Legally Binding Instrument under UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of ABNJ:** Following the conclusion of the Preparatory Committee on the elements of a draft text of an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ under UNCLOS, this session will discuss the process for the preparation of the zero draft of the instrument. **dates:** 16-18 April 2018 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN DOALOS **phone:** +1-212-963-3962 **fax:** +1-212-963-5847 **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** <https://www.un.org/bbnj/>

**Ocean Risk Summit:** Leaders from across the political, economic, environmental and risk sectors will gather. The event will present high-level speakers providing expert data, analysis and innovative tools to help participants identify potential exposures to ocean risks and prepare to tackle its broad-ranging consequences. The Summit will examine challenges and risks posed by ocean change and identify the opportunities it presents for innovative approaches to building resilience and mitigating effects through applied solutions. **dates:** 8-10 May 2018 **location:** Bermuda **email:** [info@oceanrisksummit.com](mailto:info@oceanrisksummit.com) **www:** <https://www.oceanrisksummit.com/>

**4th World Conference on Marine Biodiversity:** This event will bring together scientists, practitioners, and policymakers to discuss and advance understanding of marine biodiversity issues. **dates:** 13-16 May 2018 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** 4th WCMB Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-287-9898 ext. 334 **fax:** +1-514-287-1248 **email:** [wcm2018secretariat@jpd.com](mailto:wcm2018secretariat@jpd.com) **www:** <http://www.wcm2018.org/>

**Cobalt Crust Project Workshop:** This workshop, convened by the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association (COMRA) and the International Seabed Authority (ISA), is aimed at sharing environmental data, addressing relevant policies and laws, and considering the definition and function of a Regional Environmental Management Plan for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crust zones in the Pacific Ocean. **dates:** 27-29 May 2018 **location:** Qingdao, China **contact:** COMRA **email:** [contactus@comra.org](mailto:contactus@comra.org) **www:** <http://www.comra.org/en/>

**The Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans, 4th International Symposium:** The Symposium will highlight latest information on how oceans are changing, what is at risk and how to respond, identify knowledge gaps, promote collaborations and stimulate the next generation of science and action. **dates:** 4-8 June 2018 **location:** Washington, DC, US **contacts:** Christina Chiu **phone:** +1 250-363 6878 **email:** [Christina@pices.int](mailto:Christina@pices.int) **www:** <http://meetings.pices.int/meetings/international/2018/climate-change/scope>

**28th Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS:** This meeting will discuss matters related to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, among others. **dates:** 11-14 June 2018 **location:** UN Headquarters New York **contact:** Secretary

of the Meeting of States Parties **phone:** +1-212-963-3962 **fax:** +1-212-963-5847 **email:** [doalos@un.org](mailto:doalos@un.org) **www:** [http://www.un.org/depts/los/meeting\\_states\\_parties/twentyeighthmeetingstatesparties.htm](http://www.un.org/depts/los/meeting_states_parties/twentyeighthmeetingstatesparties.htm)

**19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea:** This meeting will focus on anthropogenic underwater noise. **dates:** 18-22 June 2018 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN DOALOS **phone:** +1-212-963-3962 **fax:** +1-212-963-5847 **email:** [doalos@un.org](mailto:doalos@un.org) **www:** [http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative\\_process/consultative\\_process.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm)

**High-Level Conference on International Decade of Water for Sustainable Development:** This meeting is being organized jointly by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the UN and will facilitate the implementation of the International Decade for Action 'Water for Sustainable Development,' 2018-2028. **dates:** 20-22 June 2018 **location:** Dushanbe, Tajikistan **www:** <https://wsdconf2018.org/>

**International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC5):** The Society for Conservation Biology's fifth International Marine Conservation Congress will bring together conservation professionals and students to develop new and powerful tools to further marine conservation science and policy. **dates:** 24-29 June 2018 **location:** Sarawak, Malaysia **contact:** IMCC5 Organizers **email:** <http://conbio.org/mini-sites/imcc5/about/contact-us/> **www:** <http://conbio.org/mini-sites/imcc5/>

**CBD SBSTTA-22:** The twenty-second meeting of the CBD SBSTTA will address, *inter alia*: protected areas, biodiversity and climate change, ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, anthropogenic underwater noise, marine debris, biodiversity in cold-water areas, and marine spatial planning. **dates:** 2-7 July 2018 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-22>

**CBD SBI-2:** The CBD Subsidiary Body on Implementation will address, *inter alia*: review of progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Biodiversity Plan, biodiversity mainstreaming, the global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism under the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing, cooperation with other conventions and processes, and mechanisms for review of implementation. **dates:** 9-13 July 2018 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBI-02>

**24th Session of the ISA Assembly and the ISA Council (Part II):** The ISA Council will consider the 2017 report of the Finance Committee, including the 2019-2020 budget proposals, and the 2018 report of the Legal and Technical Commission. The ISA Assembly will consider the 2019-2020 budget, a draft strategic plan for the ISA, and the Council's report. **dates:** 2-13 July 2018 for the Legal and Technical Commission; 9-12 July 2018 for the Finance Committee; 16-20 July 2018 for the Council; and 23-27 July 2018 for the Assembly. **location:** Kingston, Jamaica **contact:** ISA

Secretariat **phone:** +1-876-922-9105 **fax:** +1-876-922-0195 **email:** <https://www.isa.org.jm/contact-us> **www:** <https://www.isa.org.jm/>

**International Whaling Commission (IWC67):** **dates:** 4-14 September 2018 **location:** Florianopolis, Brazil **www:** <https://iwc.int/iwc67>

**ICES/UNECE Symposium on Management tools and standards in support of Sustainable Development Goal 14 ‘Life below water’:** This will be the first symposium organized by ICES that will be held in collaboration with UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) regarding the SDGs, creating an opportunity for managers, policy developers, and researchers to review concepts and address scientific, policy and regulatory challenges of operationalizing the ecosystem-based management through the use of technical standards and risk management approaches. **dates:** 9-12 October 2018 **location:** Reykjavik, Iceland **www:** <http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/symposia/Pages/Management-tools-and-standards-in-support-of-Sustainable-Development-Goal-14-Life-below-water.aspx>

**2018 UN Biodiversity Conference:** The 14th meeting of the COP CBD, the 9th Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the 3rd Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing (CBD COP 14, Cartagena Protocol COP/MOP 9, and Nagoya Protocol COP/MOP 3) will address a series of issues related to implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. **dates:** 7-22 November 2018 **location:** Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **e-mail:** [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/cop/>

**Fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4):** This meeting will take place from 11-15 March 2019, in Nairobi, Kenya, as agreed during UNEA-3 in December 2017 (UNEP/EA.3/L.2). By the same text, the Assembly decided that following the 2019 session, UNEA will convene during the last week each February, unless otherwise decided by UNEA. The President of UNEA-4 will be Estonia. **dates:** 11-15 March 2019 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** UNEP **www:** <http://web.unep.org/environmentassembly/>

## GLOSSARY

ABNJ	Areas beyond national jurisdiction	IMO	International Maritime Organization
BBNJ	Biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction	ISA	International Seabed Authority
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	LME	Large Marine Ecosystems
COMRA	China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association	MPAs	Marine Protected Areas
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations	MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
DOALOS	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea	NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
EAF	Ecosystem approach to fisheries	NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
EBM	Ecosystem-based management	PSSA	Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas	RECOFI	Regional Commission for Fisheries
EC	European Commission	RFBs	Regional Fisheries Bodies
EEZs	Exclusive Economic Zones	RFMOs	Regional Fisheries Management Organizations
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization	ROPME	Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean	RSOs	Regional Seas Organizations
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System	SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
HELCOM	Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission	SOI	Sustainable Ocean Initiative
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	SOMEE	State of Marine Environment and Associated Economies
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
IOC-UNESCO	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO	SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
IMMCC	International Marine Conservation Congress	UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
		UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
		UNEP	UN Environment
		VMEs	vulnerable marine ecosystems
		WIOMSA	Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
		WOA	World Ocean Assessment