

# Oceans Action Day Bulletin

A publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development

Tuesday, 15 November 2016 Vol. 186 No. 8

## A SUMMARY REPORT OF OCEANS ACTION DAY AT MARRAKECH COP22: 12 NOVEMBER 2016

Oceans Action Day convened on Saturday, 12 November 2016, on the margins of the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP22) in the Blue Zone.

Over 450 participants from governments, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations (NGOs and IGOs) as well as civil society representatives gathered to participate in the showcase on the actions being taken globally to tackle climate change's impacts on oceans, seas, and coastal and island contexts. The Oceans Action Day at COP22 was organized by the Government of Morocco, the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Global Ocean Forum, and the Ocean and Climate Platform. Co-organizers included the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO; Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan; Oceano Azul Foundation and Oceanario de Lisboa, Portugal; and the World Bank.

The morning session, the Oceans Showcase, featured opening remarks and a Plenary High-Level Showcase Segment with sessions on: Oceans and Climate: Solutions to the core issues (food security, mitigation, adaptation, building resilience); and Oceans and Climate: Science Solutions.

The afternoon session, Dialogue Oceans, featured three dialogues: Adaptation Challenges and Opportunities; Mitigation Actions and NDCs; and Access to Finance Building Capacity for the Blue Economy under Climate Change.

Regional dialogues took place in parallel sessions in the evening, followed by a reception.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND OCEANS

Climate change is considered to be one of the most serious threats to sustainable development, with adverse impacts expected on the environment, human health, food security, economic activity, natural resources, and physical infrastructure. Climate change is also having a profound impact on the world's oceans. Ocean warming directly impacts humans and ocean life – from sea level rise and increased storm intensity to habitat shifts and receding coastlines. This in turn disrupts ocean and coastal

foodwebs, making it harder for fish, seabirds, and humans to find food necessary for survival. These changes drastically impact vulnerable coastal and island areas, sometimes resulting in loss of life, damage to infrastructure, the economy, tourism and fisheries, and possible displacement of populations.

In addition, the oceans absorbed approximately 30-50% of the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced by humans over the last 200 years, resulting in ocean acidification with substantial impacts on ocean chemistry and life.

**THE WORLD OCEAN CONFERENCE:** The World Ocean Conference in Manado, Indonesia, took place from 11-15 May 2009. The primary outcome of the meeting was the Manado Oceans Declaration, which stressed the importance of having oceans on the climate change agenda at UNFCCC COP 15 in Copenhagen, Denmark, and beyond.

**COPENHAGEN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE AND OCEANS DAY:** The UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, took place from 7-19 December 2009. Oceans Day took place on 14 December 2009 and highlighted the direct link between climate change, ocean health and human wellbeing. The Day focused on the role of the oceans in climate change and the fact that the close to 50% of the world's population living in coastal areas will suffer disproportionately from ocean warming, sea level rise, extreme weather events, and ocean acidification.

**OUR OCEAN CONFERENCES:** The Our Ocean Conferences, an initiative of the US Government, have taken place since 2014. They focus on key ocean issues, including marine protected areas, sustainable fisheries, marine pollution, and climate-related impacts on the ocean. The first conference, held in June 2014, resulted in the development of the Our Ocean Action Plan, and US\$800 million worth of new partnerships and initiatives.

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The second conference, which took place in October 2015, generated US\$2.1 billion in commitments on oceans, including on creating and expanding marine protected areas (MPAs) and addressing marine debris and pollution. The third conference took place in September 2016 resulted in over 136 new initiatives on marine conservation and protection, as well as new commitments on the protection of approximately four million square kilometers of ocean.

**OCEANS DAY AT UNFCCC COP21:** The Paris Oceans Day, convened in the Rio Conventions Pavilion, at UNFCCC COP 21, in Paris, France on 4 December 2015. It addressed issues including: the challenges and opportunities in the context of climate and oceans; addressing the effects of climate change on oceans, and on coastal and small island developing States (SIDS) populations; mitigation and the oceans; adaptation, and financing for adaptation; capacity development, scientific monitoring, and public education; and, ‘bringing it all together: a five-year agenda for action.’

## REPORT OF OCEANS ACTION DAY AT MARRAKECH

### SHOWCASE OCEANS

Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasna, Kingdom of Morocco, opened Oceans Action Day at UNFCCC COP22, highlighting Morocco’s Blue Belt initiative, to develop socio-economic activities from marine resources in coastal communities in Morocco. She noted the social, economic and cultural importance of oceans to Morocco and outlined several initiatives to preserve the services provided by oceans to local communities.



HRH Princess Lalla Hasna, Morocco

His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco highlighted the UN initiatives that seek to protect marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. He underscored that oceans need to be decarbonized and protected from rising temperatures. He underlined challenges such as: understanding oceans’ complexity; ocean acidification and pollution; insuring blue growth; and recognizing oceans’ role in saving our climate and planet. Referencing Victor Hugo, he urged that the hour has come for humanity to protest and act.



HSB Prince Albert II, Monaco

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:** Aziz Akhannouch, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Morocco, explained that global terrestrial systems’ resilience cannot be solved without considering oceans. He cautioned that fisheries management is based on data from research supported by government funds that often have interests in maximizing sustainable yield.



Ségolène Royal, Minister of the Environment, Energy and the Sea, France,

Ségolène Royal, Minister of the Environment, Energy and the Sea, France, explained that the protection of seas presents a potential for blue growth to address the food and health challenges currently being faced. She advocated for oceans to be recognized as a common heritage to humanity. She explained that France’s extensive marine territory around the planet means France has duties,

as opposed to rights in terms of responsible marine resource conservation and stewardship.

Karmenu Vella, Commissioner on Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission, highlighted actions necessary to reinforce international ocean governance such as: ensuring strong rules that all countries must play by; international rules to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Arctic and Antarctic oceans; and the EU Strategy on Green Infrastructure.

Maria-Helena Semedo, Deputy Director General, FAO, underscored the importance of including not just green, but also blue economy goals and explained that the fisheries sector generates larger revenues than many other terrestrial sectors combined.

### PLENARY HIGH-LEVEL SHOWCASE SEGMENT

#### OCEANS AND CLIMATE: SOLUTIONS TO THE CORE

**ISSUES PART I:** This session was moderated by Manuel Barange, Director, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division, who explained that the impacts of climate change will impact fishing communities differently given that some communities are more dependent on fish resources than others.

Catherine Novelli, Under Secretary of State, US, noting that oceans could be reaching a tipping point, explained that climate change is already pushing some fish populations to migrate towards cooler waters. She drew attention to the Obama Administration’s contributions to global efforts to protect oceans including the “Our Ocean” movement, which she explained has helped secure the protection of an ocean area corresponding nearly to the size of continental Africa in three years.

Laura Tuck, World Bank, drew attention to World Bank initiatives such as: developing a blue economy development framework for developing countries; promoting climate resilience in coastal management; and mainstreaming natural resources in development planning and national economic



accounts through the Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) global partnership.

Premdud Koonjoo, Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands, Mauritius, stated that climate change is a threat multiplier for the marine environment and underscored the need to mobilize both the private and public sectors to meet the demands ahead. He urged using public resources to mobilize private resources and develop fit-for-purpose financial mechanisms.



**Premdud Koonjoo**, Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands, Mauritius

Greg Stone, Conservation International, for Anote Tong, former President of Kiribati, opened saying to solve the climate problem “oceans have to be part of the solution.” He noted that when mainstreaming oceans into the climate agenda, all stakeholders should be involved, including Indigenous Peoples whom he explained, have a deep knowledge of the ocean that is not “quaint,” but rather provides a critical understanding of how the world works.

**OCEANS AND CLIMATE: SOLUTIONS TO THE CORE ISSUES PART II:** This session was moderated by Biliana Cicin-Sain, President, Global Ocean Forum. She queried how to move the oceans agenda forward, and called attention to the Strategic Action Roadmap on Oceans and Climate 2016-2021, which presents a guide to action on mitigation, adaptation, displacement, financing, and capacity development related to oceans, for implementation in the next 5 years.

Ronald Jumeau, Ambassador for Climate Change and SIDS Issues, Seychelles, provided an overview of innovative initiatives that Seychelles is pursuing to address climate change

in the context of oceans, including: a debt for adaptation swap, whereby national debt is purchased in exchange for converting 30% of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) into a MPA; and discussions with the World Bank and the African Development Bank to develop “blue bonds,” which will be passed on to the fishing sector as sustainable loans.

Oumar Gueye, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy, Senegal, called for understanding the role oceans play in providing essential resources for food, climate, transportation, livelihoods. Describing a number of domestic measures to conserve ocean resources, he underscored the need for global decisions on issues such as IUU fishing.

Abdelmalek Faraj, Director, Institut National de Recherche Halieutique, Morocco, presented the Moroccan Blue Belt initiative, saying it can transform today’s threats “into the opportunities of tomorrow.” He said the initiative supports national and regional strategies for the management and governance of oceans, is inclusive and complementary, and aims to contribute to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs.)

#### **OCEANS AND CLIMATE: SCIENCE SOLUTIONS:**

This session was moderated by Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission-UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO), who called for developing an assessment of the value of oceans to humankind.

Hans-Otto Pörtner, Co-Chair, IPCC Working Group II, stated that the role of science is to reduce uncertainties and lamented that thus far there has been a degree of societal inertia and inaction to address issues highlighted by science.

Christopher Fox, Director of Special Projects, Ceres, described the work of his organization to encourage the investment community to incorporate long-term environmental and social risks into their decision-making. He underscored that climate messages should be translated into language that the private sector can understand.



From L-R: **Hans-Otto Pörtner**, Co-Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II, **Alfred Wegener Institute**, University of Bremen, Germany; **Vladimir Ryabinin**, Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission-UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO); **Christopher N. Fox**, Ceres; **Françoise Gail**, Ocean and Climate Platform; Achmad Poernomo, Indonesia





Achmad Poernomo, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia, underscored the importance of involving local communities to build climate resilience and adaptive capacity, and stressed the need to make use of community perspectives.

Françoise Gail, Ocean and Climate Platform, underscored that marine assessments should include a climate component and stated a need to move from science to policy.

## **DIALOGUE OCEANS**

### **SEGMENT 1: ADAPTATION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

This session was moderated by Jacqueline McGlade, UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Amb. Ngedikes Olai Uludong, Palau, said Palau has embarked on a number of efforts to protect the marine environment, including creating a MPA network and collaborating on ocean acidification issues.

Kathy Baughman McLeod, The Nature Conservancy, stated that nature reduces risk cost-effectively. She highlighted the importance of quantifying and assessing natural systems and how they contribute to reducing climate risk.

Dina Ionesco, International Organization for Migration (IOM), said climate migration is increasingly being recognized as a key global issue, citing ocean protection as central to addressing these issues.

Sylvie Goyet, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, said the Pacific region looks at mitigation and adaptation as a single issue and underscored that a transformational development path is needed.

Marco Ruiz, Ministry of Environment, Peru, said that oceans and fisheries are a key aspect of Peru's INDCs. He noted efforts in this sector involve increasing the adaptability of fishermen, and reducing their vulnerability.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed direct links between the ocean and migration, with Ionesco stating that the situation is complex and multicausal.

**SEGMENT 2: MITIGATION ACTIONS AND NDCS:** This session was moderated by Sandrine Dixon-Declève, Sustainable Energy for All, who outlined initiatives promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency in SIDS.

Amb. Waldemar Coutts, Director for Environmental and Ocean Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile, said that Chile believes MPAs are vital to restoring fisheries, with key attributes including, *inter alia*: a no-take policy; management plans; permanence; surveillance measures; and allowing an important role for communities.

Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, WWF, stressed that the climate change agenda should focus on ethics, solidarity and connectedness, and noted that oceans are not beholden by national borders.

Raffaël Jovine, Founder and Chief Scientist of Algae Ltd., outlined his company's efforts in producing algae at scale, to contribute to, among others, animal feed. He said that employing ocean systems for biomass production creates, among others, employment, which could have important impacts on the climate agenda.

Dorothee Herr, Manager, Oceans and Climate, IUCN, said coastal ecosystems are important for storing and sequestering carbon. She highlighted the Blue Carbon Initiative, which aims to mitigate climate change through the restoration and sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems, noting an increasing interest from governments.

Edmund Hughes, International Maritime Organization (IMO), outlined IMO's efforts including the Ballast Water Management Convention and a roadmap to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from ships.

Eric Banel, General Secretary, French Shipowners' Association, said that shipping can be a part of the climate solution, and urged working towards reducing emissions.



**Sandrine Dixon-Declève,**  
Sustainable Energy for All





From L-R: **Tiago Pitta e Cunha**, Oceano Azul Foundation, Portugal; **Hiroshi Terashima**, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan; and **Hrund Hafsteinsdóttir**, Iceland

Najlaa Diouri, Tanger Med Port, said that ships require infrastructure to decrease sea pollution. She remarked on the construction of infrastructure to minimize pollution in the port, and said that this is a successful example of a public-private partnership.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: ocean-based carbon sequestration feasibility; the benefit, development and use of algae for food security; the use of solar and other renewable energy in maritime transport; and increasing the penetration of renewable energy in SIDS.

**SEGMENT 3: ACCESS TO FINANCE AND BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE BLUE ECONOMY UNDER CLIMATE CHANGE:** This session was moderated by Tiago Pitta e Cunha, CEO, Oceano Azul Foundation, Portugal, who noted that the blue economy must be a leading part of the world's movement toward low-carbon economy.

Hiroshi Terashima, Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan, advocated for adopting a concrete action plan and roadmap for adaptation and mitigation that is inclusive of oceans and islands. He said high-level political leaders with a firm understanding of the importance of oceans must show leadership in the drafting and implementation of NDCs.

Stressing the need to raise awareness on the consequences of climate change, Hrund Hafsteinsdóttir, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland, underscored the need to create synergies that include the whole blue economy, in cooperation with key partners, like the World Bank and FAO.

Angus Friday, Ambassador of Grenada to the US, discussed financing and capacity building from an innovation perspective, highlighting debt financial swaps to direct debt repayments towards conservation, blue bonds, blue insurance and crowd funding for the blue economy.

During discussions, participants addressed the potential to use crowd funding for blue bonds rather just for microfinance and cases where the term blue economy is being used for carbon-intensive projects.

### SUMMARY AND CLOSURE

This session was moderated by Biliana Cicin-Sain, and Manuel Barange, FAO.

Inviting participants to the UN Conference on Oceans, to be held in June 2017, Dessima Williams, Special Adviser on Implementation of the SDGs to Ambassador Peter Thomson, President of the UN General Assembly, stressed, on behalf of the President, the need to maintain the level of political will, capacity building, financing, stakeholder engagement and solution-based approaches.

In a closing address, Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility (GEF), noted important work on oceans already in progress, including the GEF's assistance to the Seychelles in their issuance of a blue bond, and drew attention to the Global Commons Initiative, which is a multi-stakeholder initiative to safeguard the Earth's overstretched resources.



**Naoko Ishii**, Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Raphaël Cuvelier, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, thanked the sponsors of Oceans Action Day, the Global Ocean

Forum, the Government of Morocco, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, FAO, and the Ocean and Climate Platform, stressing the need to prioritize concrete solutions for oceans.

Underscoring the need to turn challenges into actions, find solutions that work for everyone and leave no one behind, Manuel Barange closed the plenary session at 4:00pm.

Oceans Action Day activities continued into the evening, with regional discussions related to oceans and climate.