

Summary of the Second UN Ocean Conference: 27 June – 1 July 2022

Having amassed billions of dollars in voluntary commitments and pledges to save the Earth’s most vital resource, the curtains came down on the second UN Ocean Conference. This renewed commitment could not have come a moment too soon. The science is clear: anthropogenic threats including deoxygenation, ocean acidification, marine pollution, and overfishing, have translated to a steep decline in ocean health.

To galvanize action to address these threats, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 73/292 in 2019 to convene a high-level Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in 2020. After two years of postponements due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Conference finally convened under the theme, “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of SDG 14: Stocktaking, partnerships and solutions.”

The Conference featured both a general debate and interactive dialogues on:

- marine pollution;
- strengthening ocean-based economies;
- managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems;
- minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation, and ocean warming;
- making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets;
- increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology;
- enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); and
- leveraging interlinkages between SDG 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Delegates announced over 300 voluntary commitments, with approximately 50 high-level commitments and pledges, including an investment of at least USD 1 billion to support the creation, expansion and management of marine protected areas (MPAs) and Indigenous and locally governed marine and coastal areas by 2030,

made by the Protecting Our Planet Challenge. Other voluntary commitments of note included:

- The Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS) launch of the Declaration for the Enhancement of Marine Scientific Knowledge, Research Capacity and Transfer of Marine Technology to Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- The Development Bank of Latin America’s commitment of USD 1.2 billion to support ocean projects in the region;
- Panama’s commitment to increase its protection of at least 40% of the marine surface area by 2030;
- China’s pledge to launch 31 marine ecological preservation and restoration projects in the next five years and provide assistance to developing countries, especially SIDS, through the One Belt One Road initiative;
- Kenya’s plans for a blue economy bank fund;
- Portugal’s plan to invest in producing ocean renewable energies with a view to reaching 10 gigawatts of capacity by 2030;
- The European Investment Bank’s commitment to extend an additional EUR 150 million across the Caribbean Region as part of the Clean Oceans Initiative;

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- US, Canada and the UK launched the IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) Fishing Action Alliance;
- India's commitment to a Coastal Clean Seas Campaign, including work to ban single use plastics, beginning with plastic bags;
- Peru's pledge to submit 19 voluntary contributions, including on aquaculture, and ocean acidification;
- Australia's pledge of USD 1.2 billion to preserve and restore the Great Barrier Reef;
- Namibia's pledge to allocate USD 5 million annually to conduct research, control, monitoring and surveillance in marine ecosystems; and
- Sweden's pledge to provide USD 400,000 in 2022 to support enhanced scientific cooperation in the UN Decade on Ocean Science.

Beyond the new commitments, delegates attending the conference reflected on the progress made since the first UN Ocean Conference in 2017. Since then, the world has taken concrete steps towards addressing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, by establishing an intergovernmental negotiating committee to hammer out a new international treaty to end plastic pollution. Delegates also measured progress on the new agreement to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity in the high seas, with many hopeful that the process will conclude in 2022, and several called for a moratorium on mining of the deep seabed. Looking ahead, France and Costa Rica announced their offer to co-host the third UN Ocean Conference in 2025.

Over 4,000 delegates, including multiple Heads of State and Government, attended the second UN Ocean Conference, which was co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Portugal and included special events and side events taking place all over the city of Lisbon, Portugal, from 27 June to 1 July 2022.

A Brief History of the UN Ocean Conference

In September 2015, Heads of State and Government adopted "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," including the 17 SDGs and 169 targets. SDG 14 contains ten targets, addressing: marine pollution; marine and coastal ecosystems; ocean acidification; overfishing and IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices; conservation; harmful fisheries subsidies; economic benefits for SIDS and least developed countries (LDCs); and, as means of implementation, increasing scientific knowledge, providing access to resources and markets for small-scale artisanal fishers, and implementing international law, among others.

The first high-level UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 was held from 5-9 June 2017, at UN Headquarters in New York. The Conference aimed to: identify ways and means to support the implementation of SDG 14; build on existing successful partnerships and stimulate innovative and concrete new partnerships to advance the implementation of SDG 14; involve all relevant stakeholders; share experiences gained at the national, regional and international levels in the implementation of SDG 14; and contribute to the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, by providing an input to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Spearheaded by Fiji and Sweden, the conference was largely considered a success in building momentum for the implementation of SDG 14, as a central rather than isolated component of the

2030 Agenda. The conference produced three outcomes: an intergovernmentally agreed Call for Action; a registry of 1,328 voluntary commitments; and key messages from the partnership dialogues.

Preparatory Process

After the success of the first UN Ocean Conference, the General Assembly, through resolution 73/292, decided to convene the high-level 2020 UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in Lisbon, Portugal, from 2-6 June 2020, under the overarching theme "Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions."

Through the same resolution, the General Assembly also initiated a preparatory process, co-facilitated by Denmark and Palau, which met for the first time from 4-5 February 2020. At that meeting, participants considered the themes for the interactive dialogues and the elements of a brief, action-oriented and agreed intergovernmental declaration. Participants also initiated informal consultations on the draft political declaration to be adopted by the Conference.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in April 2020 the General Assembly took the decision (A/74/L.48) to postpone the Conference to a later date. The pandemic also put on hold the informal meetings on the political declaration, which resumed in 2022.

First Informal Meeting: The first informal meeting on the political declaration, held on 1 February 2022 at UN Headquarters in New York, was co-facilitated by Martin Bille Hermann (Denmark) and Keisha McGuire (Grenada). They called on participants to, *inter alia*, take into consideration the work done at the first meeting, while also taking into account recent developments in ocean action. This resulted in the production of a zero draft.

Second Informal Meeting: This meeting took place on 25 March 2022 at UN Headquarters in New York. Participants made proposals to revise the zero-draft to best reflect the science-based and innovative areas of action to support the implementation of SDG 14.

Ocean Conference Report

On Monday, Carlos Moedas, Mayor of Lisbon, invited participants to be inspired by the city's Tower of Belém, calling on delegates to use this conference to mark the end of ocean degradation and the beginning of ocean preservation, setting the world on a sustainable ocean trajectory.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres opened the Conference, offering four recommendations for addressing the ocean emergency: invest in sustainable ocean economies for food and renewable energy; use the ocean as a model for how to manage global problems for the greater good; protect the ocean and people whose lives and livelihoods depend on them; and invest in early warning systems to protect coastal communities. He said the Conference can open a new horizon for a just and sustainable future for all, making a difference for the ocean and for ourselves.

Delegates elected, by acclamation, President Uhuru Kenyatta, Kenya, and President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, Portugal, to serve as the Conference Co-Presidents. In his opening remarks, President de Sousa underlined that the Conference is being held at the right time, in the right place and through the right approach, underscoring the

centrality of the ocean to peace and security, health, environmental resilience, and sustainable development.

Lamenting that the global goal on the ocean is the least financed SDG, President Kenyatta urged delegates to shift gears from ideas to action driven by science and innovation, and called for examples of nature-based solutions linking the ocean and climate change, as well as financing solutions for the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean.

Abdulla Shahid, President of the UN General Assembly, said there is no context where we live on the planet without the ocean and highlighted the increasing contribution of women scientists and the passion and commitment youth bring to this work.

Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), highlighted the timing of the conference as an opportunity to provide essential inputs to the second in-depth review of SDG 14 at the upcoming 2022 High-level Political Forum.

Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Conference Secretary-General, focused on the importance of science and innovation and opportunities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

Organizational Matters

On Monday, delegates adopted the conference's rules of procedure, agenda, and organization of work (A/CONF.230/1-3); elected as Vice-Presidents: Angola and Mozambique, for Africa; Iran, Singapore and Sri Lanka for Asia and the Pacific; Estonia, Latvia and Poland for Central and Eastern Europe; Chile, Dominican Republic and Peru for Latin America and the Caribbean; and Iceland and Malta for the Western Europe and Others Group; and elected Maria de Jesus dos Reis Ferreira (Angola) as the Conference's Rapporteur.

Credentials: On Monday, the Conference established a credentials committee and appointed co-chairs for the eight interactive dialogues to be held throughout the week. On Friday during the closing plenary, PALAU lamented the exclusion of Taiwan from the Conference. CHINA asserted their One-China policy, stating that the mention of Taiwan "is not appropriate." The Conference then adopted the report of the credentials committee (A/CONF.230/2022/13).

General Debate

Delegates engaged in a general debate in plenary from Monday morning to Thursday afternoon. The following section summarizes statements delivered during the week, clustered around broad thematic areas.

Marine Pollution, including Plastic Pollution: President Surangel Whipps, PALAU, speaking also for the Pacific small island developing states (PSIDS), highlighted the region's support for the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) working on an international legally binding instrument (ILBI) to end plastic pollution. President Nana Akufo-Addo, GHANA, highlighted Ghana's role in co-convening the Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution. President Teodoro Obiang Mbasogo, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, highlighted plans for new waste treatment facilities to stop dumping plastic in the ocean. HSH Prince Albert, MONACO, shared the Beyond Plastic Med initiative providing EUR 1.3 million for 69 projects in 15 countries.

TONGA called for a strong agreement on plastic pollution, supported the conclusion of negotiations on the guidelines for exploitation of mineral resources under the International Seabed Authority (ISA). NORWAY encouraged the world to "act as though the plastic pollution treaty already exists." ARGENTINA highlighted a draft law to manage plastic packaging production. The GAMBIA described their commitment to banning single use plastics and QATAR outlined efforts and positive results from banning single-use plastic bags. MALDIVES pointed to a national phase-out plan for single-use plastic. RUSSIAN FEDERATION stressed the need to stop the production and use of single-use plastics and, with BRAZIL, GEORGIA, IRAQ, and several others, supported an ILBI on plastic pollution.

CYPRUS, with CROATIA, discussed land-based sources of marine pollution. ESTONIA confirmed plans to address marine pollution from industrial and pharmaceutical hazardous waste. PANAMA shared goals to finalize the national action plan for marine litter. TÜRKIYE highlighted a "zero waste blue project" addressing marine pollution. JAMAICA noted action to address plastic pollution. The PHILIPPINES discussed their 2021 national plan of action on marine litter. IRAN called to address ocean pollution by military fleets. TUNISIA drew attention to their plans for a plastic-free coastline. POLAND shared their interest in addressing marine pollution.

COSTA RICA highlighted their work in the GloLitter Partnership Project, and on the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People. BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION highlighted the Blueing the Black Sea Global Environment Facility (GEF) Regional project to address pollution and blue economy investments. THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) highlighted the recent launch of the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC Plastics), to monitor and track plastic in the ocean and improve recycling rates. OCEANCARE called to recognize ocean noise as marine pollution and ban ocean-floor drilling operations.

Fisheries, including IUU Fishing: President João Lourenço, ANGOLA, stressed the need for solutions to reverse current trends of ocean pollution and unregulated exploitation of marine resources, and shared his country's actions to guard against unregulated commercial fishing. He also highlighted the actions of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries, including cooperation under the Namibe Declaration to promote sustainable fisheries. President Nana Akufo-Addo, GHANA, urged countries to ratify the Cape Town Agreement for the Safety of Fishing Vessels to protect sea farers. Vice President Philip Mpango, TANZANIA, highlighted his country's commitments in sustainable ocean development—particularly to fight IUU fishing, such as the establishment of science and innovation partnerships, MPAs, and modernizing fisheries.

NEW ZEALAND welcomed the conclusion of the agreement on fisheries subsidies under the World Trade Organization (WTO). The US urged for decarbonizing ocean transport, and increasing high seas protected areas, and announced the signing of the US National Security Memorandum to Combat IUU Fishing and Associated Labor Abuses, and the IUU Fishing Action Alliance, with the UK and Canada. SOLOMON ISLANDS highlighted electronic monitoring plans to deter IUU fishing.

MARSHALL ISLANDS called for strengthened labor protection measures for sustainable fisheries. SPAIN underscored the value of sustainable fishing. KIRIBATI underlined that the “fishing for profit” mindset has led to IUU fishing, highlighting that it is “one of the greatest threats to ocean health and wealth.”

CANADA announced 20 new voluntary contributions, including CAD 1.7 million to address IUU fishing in developing countries. The GAMBIA described their commitment to fighting IUU fishing. CÔTE D’IVOIRE highlighted the country’s focus on sustainable fisheries, including annual no-take periods. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) explained that oceans, rivers and lakes can feed the world only if they are “valued responsibly, sustainably and equitably,” pointing to the Blue Transformation Roadmap 2022-2030. The ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, AND PACIFIC STATES drew attention to their Strategic Plan for Fisheries and Aquaculture.

The GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD INITIATIVE called for the ratification of the Agreement on Port State Measures to address IUU fishing. BLUE VENTURES emphasized listening to fishers, securing their preferential access rights, and prioritizing local food and job security. The GLOBAL GHOST GEAR INITIATIVE applauded the International Maritime Organization (IMO) decision on mandatory marking of fishing gear. SAILORS FOR THE SEA JAPAN pointed to their Blue Seafood Guide. The MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL flagged the need for sustainable fishing for a blue food revolution, pledging that the proportion of catch from oceans will expand to be a third of global catch by 2030. RARE noted mayoral actions to establish no-take zones in the coral triangle and in meso-America to encourage sustainable fisheries.

High Seas: President Surangel Whipps, PALAU, speaking also for PSIDS, supported a new agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). He announced his country’s commitment to generate 100% renewable energy by 2032. Katrín Jakobsdóttir, Prime Minister, ICELAND, highlighted the value of oceans and marine resources in bringing solutions to current crises and feeding the population. She announced that Iceland has joined the high ambition coalition on BBNJ.

TONGA, SINGAPORE, BELGIUM, FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA and SOUTH AFRICA called for a strong agreement on BBNJ, with several urging that negotiations be concluded at the fifth Intergovernmental Conference in August 2022. GERMANY highlighted the G7 Ocean Deal, which prioritizes, among others, the conclusion of the BBNJ negotiations and stringent environmental management plans and standards under the ISA.

BOLIVIA reiterated that the ocean is the common heritage of humankind, calling for fair distribution of marine genetic resources. The INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY recalled the General Assembly decision to maintain the deep seabed beyond national jurisdiction as the common heritage of humankind. The INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY, with the MAJOR GROUP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH, WORLD OCEAN NETWORK and the CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH OF PEACE, CARITAS OCEANIA and others, joined calls for a moratorium on seabed mining. INTERNATIONAL UNION OF SOCIALIST YOUTH called for a ban on bottom trawling, and a ban on deep seabed mining. TUVALU

called for international support to ensure that the exclusive economic zones (EEZ) of Pacific-island nations are not affected by sea-level rise.

MPAs: President Iván Duque, COLOMBIA, shared his country’s commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030; conserve and protect 30% of its marine areas; restore one million hectares of coral reef areas; implement a blue carbon programme to protect mangroves; and establish a joint MPA with other countries.

CHINA announced the restoration and protection of 31 marine and coastal zones in the next five years. MALDIVES pointed to a national plan to protect 20% of their marine area. IRELAND shared their commitment to expand MPAs to reach 30% and obtain 5 GW of offshore renewable energy by 2030; and pledge EUR 10 million for international ocean action to support a research partnership with SIDS. ALGERIA announced three additional voluntary commitments, including on MPAs. PAPUA NEW GUINEA highlighted progress on MPAs and noted the IMO’s recognition of the country’s particularly sensitive sea areas. GABON reported 26% MPA coverage and called for a “blue REDD+ programme” to address seagrass degradation.

ISRAEL announced plans to declare the Palmachim Disturbance as an MPA. PANAMA shared goals to increase MPAs by 40% by 2030. ECUADOR highlighted the addition of the Hermandad MPA to the Galápagos protected area. CHILE called for cooperation in the establishment of additional marine protected corridors. OMAN noted the creation of 13 MPAs. JAMAICA committed to designating a further 10% of their marine area as protected. MAURITIUS plans to establish a new MPA in the Chagos Archipelago. The UK registered their ongoing jurisdiction over this area.

BELGIUM expressed optimism to turn the tide on ocean degradation by achieving the 30x30 target related to protected areas and NIGERIA stressed the importance of restoring the health and resilience of the ocean. CAMBODIA highlighted their designation of an MPA covering 405 square kilometers. COOK ISLANDS reported on the 2017 designation of the Moare Moana marine park, entirely covering their 1.9 million square kilometer EEZ. SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS reported on the country’s marine management area.

FRENCH POLYNESIA asserted islands are a source of opportunity and solutions, outlining alternative development that values traditional knowledge and solidarity between generations, highlighting the commitment to protect 1 million square kilometers of ocean. CONSEIL DES INNU DE EKUANITSHIT called for better protection of MPAs and migratory species and GREENX TELEMECHANICS LIMITED said it is “time for the world to wake up.” The NETWORK OF MPA MANAGERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN called for a new global alliance to boost MPA financing. CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY highlighted a new MPA grounded in traditional knowledge and laws and supported by a robust management plan on Indigenous lands.

Climate Change and Biodiversity: Chairman of the Presidential Council, Mohamed Younis Ahmed Al-Manfi, LIBYA, said security issues are exacerbating ecosystem damage in his country. President Umaro Sissoco Embaló, GUINEA BISSAU, emphasized his country’s vulnerability to climate change and said the greatest hope for protecting the ocean resides in the youth and growing environmental awareness. Prime Minister Johnny Briceño, BELIZE, underlined the need to cease the approval of new fossil fuel projects,

which he called “carbon bombs.” HSH Prince Albert, MONACO, shared initiatives including the MedFund, providing EUR 20.5 million for sustainable marine biodiversity conservation. President Emmanuel Macron, FRANCE, highlighted EU decisions on climate goals for 2030.

Pakistan, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/CHINA), proposed an institutional framework such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for the ocean. BAHAMAS underscored the need to work together towards decarbonization and a sustainable and equitable blue and green economy. ITALY called on others to join the Blue Leaders initiative, sharing the launch of a restoration programme with EUR 400 million.

ZIMBABWE lamented that landlocked countries have limited ocean access, in spite of UNCLOS stipulations, and called on rich nations to accelerate greenhouse gas emissions reductions. VANUATU shared that a coalition of the willing has proposed to lodge a case at the International Court of Justice to protect vulnerable nations from climate change. AUSTRALIA emphasized the need to lift up Indigenous voices, sharing ambition to reach zero emissions by 2050 and protect 30% of land and sea by 2030. YEMEN sounded the alarm about a potential oil spill from the FSO Safer in the Red Sea, which contains over 1 million barrels of oil. NAURU shared the challenges of SIDS and called on developed countries to take responsibility for historical climate change.

MARSHALL ISLANDS stressed the need for zero-emissions shipping by 2030, with the imposition of a USD 100 carbon levy by 2025. PANAMA shared goals to make the Panama Canal carbon neutral by 2030. COMOROS warned that the number of climate migrants would increase unless the world takes tangible climate action, with CUBA announcing their climate mitigation “Life Task Plan.” SAUDI ARABIA highlighted a 2020 research and development programme on coral.

PAKISTAN highlighted, among others, the planting of 7.5 million mangroves along the country’s coastline. MADAGASCAR shared plans for a meteorological system to enhance climate resilience among fisherfolk. SLOVENIA renewed their commitment of 30% protection of global land and sea by 2030. MAURITIUS reported the planting of 400,000 mangroves to restore degraded ecosystems. BULGARIA highlighted their investment in marine biodiversity conservation. HAITI called for urgent action to address, among others, ocean acidification, overfishing, and ocean dead zones.

SRI LANKA highlighted their leadership role in the Action Group on Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods, which may soon include ethical carbon trading. SENEGAL called for implementation of the Paris Agreement, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, and the Convention on Biological Diversity to effectively address ocean threats. EGYPT expressed hope that the outcomes from the 27th meeting of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 27) will take into account the need for ocean action. MALTA announced that they would prioritize the climate-ocean-security nexus at the UN Security Council.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC underlined cost-effective, ecosystem approaches, prioritizing nature-based solutions for coordinated ocean action. UNITED ARAB EMIRATES committed to, *inter alia*, focus on ecosystem restoration by planting 100 million mangroves by 2030, and establishing a marine innovation park as a center of excellence for science and research. UNA PUNTA CINCO

highlighted the commitment to ocean action of the Regional Climate Conference of Youth in Latin America. BLUE FOREST called for improved satellite imagery to monitor mangroves and strengthening of private sector financing to expand mangrove forests. NATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHY CENTRE, UK called for the promotion of the ocean-biodiversity nexus, and for the enhancement of marine scientific research, noting the importance of an underwater ocean sensing network.

Blue Economy: Jorge Lopes Bom Jesus, Prime Minister, SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE, shared efforts to transition to a blue economy, adopting a strategic macro-vision to link all parts of society. Morocco, for the AFRICAN GROUP, highlighted the African Union’s Agenda 2063, which prioritizes the blue economy, calling for inclusive and innovative partnerships to mobilize support for implementation. SEYCHELLES emphasized the blue economy to overcome threats of climate change and to source innovative solutions to economic and social challenges. KENYA announced the establishment of a blue economy bank fund. LUXEMBOURG announced a recently launched Blue Natural Capital Fund Facility for blue economy investments. CAMEROON called for an inclusive blue economy fund.

The NETHERLANDS outlined the 2020 North Sea Agreement as part of its sustainable blue economy ambitions. BENIN highlighted the value of scientific research and its national strategy for development of the blue economy. The AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION discussed the African Blue Economy Strategy to promote the development of marine resources.

Partnerships and Finance: Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister, Fiji, on behalf of the PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM, recalled that SDG 14 is by far the least funded of the SDGs, and stressed that the rights of small island states’ maritime zones will not be lost when land disappears due to sea-level rise. Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva, CABO VERDE, stressed the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships to strengthen the country’s blue and green economy pathways. Prime Minister Johnny Briceño, BELIZE, drew attention to the country’s issuance of the region’s first blue bond. President Emmanuel Macron, France, indicated the country’s intent to co-host the third UN Ocean Conference in 2025 with Costa Rica.

Pakistan, for the G-77/CHINA, stressed the need to mobilize the required means of implementation to accelerate the achievement of SDG 14. INDONESIA announced the issuance of a sovereign blue bond. MEXICO, with TRINIDAD and TOBAGO, stressed the importance of developing countries’ access to donor funding and climate finance. MALDIVES and MOZAMBIQUE pointed to financial challenges and limitations to achieving SDG 14. TUNISIA called for greater cooperation to implement national action plans. EL SALVADOR underlined the importance of scientific data and financial resources to achieve SDG 14, emphasizing meaningful inclusion of women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples for innovative solutions.

CHINA announced technical support and assistance to developing countries and SIDS through its Global Development Initiative; and RMB 5 million to launch a global blue partnership and network. SWEDEN noted the need for “new blue capital” to invest in the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, and announced USD 5 million to prevent an oil spill off the coast of Yemen. IRELAND pledged EUR 10 million for international ocean action to support a research partnership with SIDS. The UK highlighted commitments

to double climate finance to GBP 11.6 billion, spending a third on nature-based solutions with GBP 500 million invested in the Blue Planet Fund; and invest GBP 154 million into the new coast programme helping vulnerable communities adapt to climate change. JAPAN reported USD 24 million pledged in new voluntary commitments.

The DEVELOPMENT BANK OF LATIN AMERICA announced USD 1.25 billion over five years in direct funding to promote, *inter alia*, the blue economy, marine and coastal ecosystems recovery, and blue carbon. The EUROPEAN COMMISSION announced 50 voluntary contributions worth EUR 7 billion, including EUR 1 billion to protect high seas biodiversity. GREECE announced a partnership with the US to host the ninth Our Ocean Conference in 2024. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA described efforts to scale up investment in ocean renewable and hydrogen energy production. LATVIA highlighted the role of the Baltic Sea Action Plan in addressing ocean threats. FINLAND announced 11 voluntary commitments worth EUR 100 million and the COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT announced the Blue Charter Report Project Incubator with the target to incubate 30 country-led ocean solutions.

VIET NAM emphasized the need for partnerships, new technologies and tools to achieve SDG 14. The NORTH-EAST ATLANTIC FISHERIES COMMISSION called for coordinated partnerships. The UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP) noted their provision of technical assistance and climate finance to support ocean action. OCEANO CONSERVANCY stressed that ocean action commitments need to be accompanied by sustainable finance and comprehensive implementation plans. UPWELL TURTLES pledged USD 750,000 over two years to monitor critically endangered Pacific leatherback turtle populations. SWEN BLUE OCEAN called attention to the Blue Ocean Impact Fund to support entrepreneurial ventures supporting ocean actions. SAINT LUCIA and BARBADOS called for scientific partnerships.

Ocean Literacy, Science and Innovation: António Costa, Prime Minister, PORTUGAL, spoke about developments in ocean sustainability, such as ensuring 100% of maritime areas under Portugal's jurisdiction will be environmentally sound, recognizing the link between science and the ocean, and developing a bioeconomy strategy. Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, NAMIBIA, prioritized opportunities for ocean wealth, health, and equity, in line with the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy.

MUN IMPACT emphasized the need for courage to “walk the unconventional path” to confront the threats to the ocean, including by promoting ocean education for youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, and vulnerable groups. TIMOR-LESTE and INDIA expressed interest in establishing a marine education center and a regional sustainable coastal and ocean research institute. ARMENIA noted the country's partnership with the UN EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO) on a communication campaign for a new generation of effective change makers, including for the ocean. BANGLADESH emphasized capacity development as paramount to generate, integrate, and render accessible ocean data, information and knowledge.

BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION highlighted the Virtual Blue Career Center to promote synergies in the region. UNESCO welcomed the Framework of Ocean Decade Alliance

and reported 160 actions for transformative science in every ocean basin in the world. NIPPON FOUNDATION reviewed efforts to strengthen training opportunities for SIDS, particularly of young researchers. COMUNIDAD Y BIODIVERSIDAD called for democratizing science and incorporating a human rights-based approach, sharing their plan for a sustainable fisheries app, reaching 300,000 people in Latin America by 2030.

UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS appealed to make explicit in the UN Ocean Conference declaration the knowledge and experiences of local and regional governments for sustainable management models. INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL called for new ways for self-organizing, bottom-up learning and impact networks to share ocean openly.

SINGAPORE, PERU and THAILAND shared additional voluntary commitments, including on, respectively: research into renewable energy for ocean action; sustainable aquaculture; and observation and research of ocean acidification. QATAR outlined efforts and positive results from preserving marine resources through integrated management, and supporting marine sciences.

Other Issues: MOROCCO reiterated commitment to legal instruments governing the marine environment. PALESTINE urged for implementation of UNCLOS, calling on states that have not done so to ratify to ensure “a global vision rooted in national and regional realities.” CYPRUS supported the Barcelona Convention emissions control area for sulphur oxides. NEPAL underlined the need to fully implement UNCLOS alongside the SDGs and Paris Agreement. OCEANO AZUL FOUNDATION called on government leaders to put in place legally binding protocols to regulate ocean action. The UN Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of Marine Environment Including Socioeconomic Aspects highlighted bridging the science policy interface through briefs and assessments relevant to decision makers, as well as building capacity in ocean governance.

STIFTELSEN STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE encouraged, *inter alia*, local to global actions to increase investment in science and education, include all stakeholders and innovate transformative, replicable, scalable solutions. POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES supported global ocean literacy programmes. GLOBAL OCEAN BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE called attention to their work in marine science including the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas. The SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY ON OCEAN RESEARCH highlighted work to promote networking across all ocean science disciplines. BLUEBIO ALLIANCE spoke on scaling ocean action through innovative technologies.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO called for evidence-based approaches for integrated coastal zone management. GUYANA urged moving away from official development assistance (ODA) to manage ocean resources. VENEZUELA affirmed the indivisibility of all SDGs and reiterated commitment to achieve the goals. The HOLY SEE underlined the need for an integrated, human-centered approach to environmental protection. UKRAINE called for international cooperation and coordination to protect humanity and nature.

POLAND shared their interest to develop offshore renewable energy. PACIFIC ISLAND FORUM reflected leadership in providing blue Pacific solutions, underscoring the need to address nuclear safety measures and waste management. BRITISH VIRGIN

ISLANDS called for a paradigm shift, reclassifying SIDS to large ocean countries. LIVE OCEAN drew attention to the Voices of a Healthy Ocean Declaration, and pledged to support science partnerships and solutions. EDP GROUP announced plans to expand renewable energy provision in Europe by 2025.

MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF SAINT COLUMBAN lamented the absence at this conference of many Pacific Island people, especially women, and urged they be invited as guests at future ocean conferences. HEIRS TO OUR OCEANS underscored the need for intergenerational equity, calling for lowering the conference registration age to 15. EARTH ECO INTERNATIONAL underlined the need for youth leadership in conservation decision making. BRAZILIAN HUMPBACK WHALE INSTITUTE called for the voice of civil society to be heard first, not last.

Interactive Dialogues

Eight interactive dialogues were held during the week.

Addressing Marine Pollution: This dialogue was co-chaired by David Parker, Minister for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, New Zealand, and Flavien Joubert, Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Seychelles, on Monday afternoon. Co-Chair Joubert opened the dialogue and introduced the concept paper (A/CONF.230/2022/9). He called for cooperation to achieve substantive results to achieve SDG 14, and welcomed the focus on a new treaty to end plastic pollution. Co-Chair Parker called on all countries involved in the negotiation of a new plastic pollution treaty to aim for a high ambition agreement, noting the need for strong multi-stakeholder engagement and financing.

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-27jun2022

Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for SIDS and LDCs: This dialogue was co-chaired by Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Climate and the Environment, Norway, and Abraão Vicente, Minister of the Sea, Cabo Verde, on Tuesday morning. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/10) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Eide noted “ground-breaking” progress, including agreements on plastic pollution and fisheries subsidies. Co-Chair Vicente emphasized investing in ocean security, science, and research. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, WTO Director-General, highlighted the WTO’s recent Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, saying, “without global solidarity we cannot solve problems of the global commons.”

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-28jun2022

Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems: This dialogue was co-chaired by Ximena Fuentes, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chile, and Tanya Plibersek, Minister for the Environment and Water, Australia, on Tuesday afternoon. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/11) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Fuentes opened the session, calling to strengthen the social dimension of sustainable development. Co-Chair Plibersek urged acting seriously, cleverly, and immediately on climate change. Moderator Isabella Lövin, Stockholm Environment Institute, said progress has been made but not enough, noting the absence of an operational definition of marine ecosystem health.

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-28jun2022

Ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming: This dialogue was co-chaired by John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, US, and Matthew Samuda, Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica, on Wednesday morning. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/4) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Kerry announced: joining the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (OA Alliance); the initiative on Green Shipping Challenge, with Norway; and USD 15 billion over five years for climate change adaptation in developing countries. Co-Chair Samuda highlighted vulnerabilities of SIDS, noting lack of political will to address capacity building and funding gaps, and said 50% of Jamaica’s energy will come from renewable sources by 2030.

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-29jun2022

Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets:

This dialogue was co-chaired by Derek Klazen, Minister, Fisheries and Marine Resources, Namibia, and Lawrence Hanson, Associate Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, on Wednesday afternoon. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/5) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Klazen shared Namibia’s protection of fish stocks through policies that restrict trolling and longlining within a 200m isobath. Co-Chair Hanson highlighted actions on ghost gear, and capacity building efforts to stop IUU fishing.

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-29jun2022

Increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology: This dialogue was co-chaired by Amélie de Montchalin, Minister, Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion, France, and Franz Tattenbach, Minister, Environment and Energy, Costa Rica, on Thursday morning. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/6) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Montchalin opened the dialogue, underscoring the need to share ocean science and Co-Chair Tattenbach said science allows us to understand human impacts and take tangible action, including meeting national voluntary commitments.

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-30jun2022

Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in UNCLOS: This dialogue was co-chaired by Gudlaugur Thór Thórdarson, Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate, Iceland, and Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore, on Thursday afternoon. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/7) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Thórdarson called UNCLOS one of the world’s greatest achievements, providing stability and predictability and contributing to peace and security, even though threats such as acidification were not known to its drafters. Co-Chair Balakrishnan said UNCLOS strikes the right balance—enabling economic growth and protecting the marine environment.

A summary of the discussions is available at: enb.iisd.org/2022-un-ocean-conference-daily-report-30jun2022

Leveraging interlinkages between SDG 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: This session was co-chaired by Borislav Sandov, Deputy Prime Minister

for Climate Policies and Minister of Environment and Waters, Bulgaria, and Molwyn Joseph, Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Antigua and Barbuda on Friday morning. Delegates referred to a concept note (A/CONF.230/2022/8) prepared by the Secretariat. Co-Chair Sandov called for a focus on the links between the blue economy and other SDGs, and underscored the role of academia and the private sector in contributing to research and finance to achieve SDG 14. Co-Chair Joseph underlined the need for a holistic approach to SDG implementation, noting the importance of building relationships to foster a truly ocean-based economy for SIDS and others.

Emphasizing the need to stop thinking about the SDGs as 17 different silos, Moderator James Leape, Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment, highlighted that “blue foods,” which are foods captured or cultivated in the marine environment, can help to achieve the global goals related to health, climate change, poverty, gender equality, and decent jobs.

In the panel discussion, Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, called for an assessment of both the synergies and potential adverse effects of action on SDGs, in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda more holistically and without leaving anyone behind. He highlighted, for instance, that the new WTO agreement to end fisheries subsidies will likely address overfishing, but may also create job losses in the industry.

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, ESCAP, joined others calling for strong partnerships and financing for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and noted the interlinkages between oceans, cities, local authorities, climate change, and education. She also noted ESCAP’s role as Chair of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership and drew attention to the Asia-Pacific Day of the Ocean.

Teresa Moreira, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), highlighted areas where a proposed “blue deal” can benefit the ocean: ocean-based sectors such as sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, offshore energy, tourism, biotechnology, bio prospecting, clean affordable energy to accelerate climate action, and ocean-based food security.

Charles Fox, Executive Director, Oceans 5, promoted ocean philanthropy and compared lower financing available for oceans with climate change. Charlina Vitcheva, Director General, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, European Commission, presented voluntary commitments of the EU, stressing that addressing interlinkages is vital.

Claire Jolly, Directorate, Science, Technology and Innovation, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), shared conclusions from studies: interlinkages and overlaps between SDG 14 and other goals are growing; there is an absence of measurement tools to track 40 SDG targets; and there is increasing attention to the ocean due to the plethora of related policy instruments attracting finance.

During discussions, several recognized the compounding pressures of the global pandemic and conflict in Ukraine on achieving SDG 14. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO underscored the ocean climate nexus, calling for ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, which include ocean actions and nature-based solutions, sharing integrated coastal zone management to maximize restoration, and carbon storage of mangroves and seagrass beds.

CABO VERDE encouraged all human economic activities to be sustainable and respectful of economic value and PORTUGAL emphasized the need for scientific knowledge to address specific challenges on global food supply. The PHILIPPINES reviewed connections between patterns of consumption and production and marine health, expressing opportunities to stimulate a green recovery anchored in the blue economy.

ROMANIA and BRAZIL addressed interlinkages among SDG 14 with SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), highlighting measures to reduce land-based pollution and provision of adequate legal environments to attract investments, respectively. COLOMBIA highlighted limited availability of freshwater and the economic potential of water markets.

MEDICAL IMPACT highlighted the links between SDG 3 (good health and well-being) and SDG 14. The INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY reflected on an independent study that affirmed its meaningful contribution to achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The MAJOR GROUP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH encouraged delegates to seek “real and meaningful” engagement with youth and scientific experts in policy making. AQUAMATER called for the inclusion of youth in government delegations. HAITI called on the international community to deploy all their resources to reduce emissions and provide adaptation measures.

ICLEI-LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY highlighted the role of coastal regions and cities to mobilize ocean actions. NATIONAL OCEAN POLICY COALITION and APCO WORLDWIDE LLC called for more participation of the private and business sectors in ocean governance.

Nauru, for PSIDS, called for, *inter alia*: inclusion of more SIDS voices, especially women, in ocean science; sustainable and responsible public and private investments for capacity building and technical support; and support for the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA Pathway) for effective monitoring and accountability. ZIMBABWE spoke on the widening inequalities related to access to frontier technologies, calling for better access, awareness raising, capacity building, and technology transfer, including for land-locked developing countries.

SAUDI ARABIA praised the Saudi Green Initiative for increasing protected areas and achieving climate goals, and called for inclusivity in approaches and solutions. OMAN shared the story of a humpback whale caught by fishing nets to illustrate the dangers of discarded fishing gear and debris. BAHRAIN highlighted establishing marine reserves, protecting mangroves, establishing sustainable fisheries, and reducing plastic pollution.

In closing, UN Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin noted helpful contributions to HLPF and Alisjahbana reiterated the importance of evidence-based policy formation and regional cooperation. Moreira emphasized that international trade can be an enabler for all SDGs and Vitcheva warned that exploitation of marine resources must be done sustainably, identifying the upcoming BBNJ negotiations as a “testing point of the claims we make today.” Co-Chair Joseph concluded by reiterating the call to support SIDS and Co-Chair Sandov expressed hope for strengthened implementation of the SDGs through integrated partnerships.

Reports from Around the Conference

On Friday, the Co-Chairs of the interactive dialogues reported on the discussions from each dialogue. Participants then heard, on an exceptional basis, reports from the special events that convened at different venues in Lisbon throughout the week.

Lúisa Salgueiro, Mayor of Matosinhos, Portugal, presented key messages from the special event on Localizing Action for the Ocean: Local and Regional Governments, including: ecological and energy transition should be examined from a regional perspective; coastal stakeholders should be included in decision-making processes; international finance should be channeled towards impactful projects; people-centered adaptation processes are fundamental; and a collaborative governance model is fundamental, so decisions do not harm communities.

Abbas Mahmoud, Kenya, promoted the Global Blue New Deal and presented key phrases from the Youth and Innovation Forum, including: there is no middle road to the climate crisis; humanity is suffering the consequences of the inaction of older generations, pointing to the droughts in Eastern Africa and Central America, the food and water shortages in South India and the wildfires in Australia; the people in countries that have emitted the least greenhouse gases are also suffering the greatest consequences due to the crises created by imperialism; and we need to choose between regression or revolution.

Duarte Cordeiro, Minister for Environment and Climate Action, Portugal, presented key ideas from the High-Level Symposium on Water – Bridging SDG 6 and SDG 14, including that: ocean health depends on how internal waters and coastal areas are managed; access to fresh water and safe water and sanitation are a human right; legal, financial and regulatory instruments regarding plastic pollution are key; and the key to the sustainability of the planet lies in financial tools.

Peter Thomson, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, shared the results of the Sustainable Blue Economy Investment Forum. He transmitted a "deep apology" from the UN Secretary-General to the youth of the world, stating that "our generation will spend our remaining years implementing solutions for the problems we have created for them," promising that youth "will no longer sit at the edge of conferences, because it is their future we are talking about." He welcomed the commitments made towards the implementation of SDG 14 and called 2022 "the year to act," signaling the decision to end plastic pollution at the fifth meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5) as the beginning of a wave that has swept over the WTO decision on fisheries subsidies and will continue to the BBNJ agreement in August and go on to UNFCCC COP 27 and finally to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP 15, where the 30x30 target will be decided.

Outcome of the Conference

Co-Facilitator of the informal meeting on the political declaration, Martin Bille Hermann, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN, reflected on the journey to produce the political declaration, noting a high level of engagement from states as well as civil society, youth, and the private sector. Keisha McGuire, Permanent Representative of Grenada to the UN, recognizing the input from experts, expressed pride in the declaration that emphasizes regret in not achieving the four targets of SDG 14 that have matured, and reaffirms commitment to raise ambition.

AZERBAIJAN, opposed by ARMENIA, flagging the interlinkage between ocean and fresh-water sustainability, called on Armenia to halt harmful activities polluting transboundary resources, and for all countries in the region to ratify the UN Water Convention.

The Conference then adopted the Political Declaration, "Our Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility." Exercising their right to reply, the US noted that all references to technology transfer should be subject to mutually agreed terms. IRAN and VENEZUELA noted that their acceptance of the declaration should not be interpreted as a change to the legal position on UNCLOS, as non-parties.

Final Outcome: The Ocean Conference adopted the declaration entitled "Our Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility" (A/CONF.230/2022/L.1), as the outcome document, and recommends that the General Assembly endorse it, at its 76th session.

In the political declaration itself (A/CONF.230/2022/12), Heads of State and Government, and high-level representatives, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders, reaffirm strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use the ocean, seas and marine resources, and call for greater ambition at all levels to act decisively and urgently to improve health, productivity, sustainable use, and resilience of the ocean and its ecosystems. Reaffirming the 2017 UN Ocean Conference Declaration "Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action," they also:

- recognize the ocean is fundamental to life on our planet and to our future, underlining the interlinkages and potential synergies between SDG 14 and other SDGs;
- regret collective failure to achieve targets 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6 that matured in 2020 and renew commitment to taking urgent action and to cooperate at the global, regional and subregional levels to achieve all targets as soon as possible;
- emphasize the importance of implementing the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact on mitigation, adaptation, and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer, and capacity building to developing countries, including SIDS;
- call for an ambitious, balanced, practical, effective, robust, and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at CBD COP 15, noting voluntary commitments by more than 100 Member States to conserve or protect at least 30% of global ocean within MPA effective area-based conservation measures by 2030, emphasizing the need for strong governance and adequate finance for developing countries, in particular SIDS, and recognizing the importance of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration;
- welcome the UNEA decision to convene an INC to develop an ILBI on plastic pollution;
- affirm the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, advancement of nature-based solutions, and ecosystem-based approaches play a critical role to ensure sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally resilient recovery from COVID-19; and
- affirm the need to implement international law as reflected in UNCLOS, recognizing the importance of the work being undertaken by the INC on an ILBI under UNCLOS on BBNJ and call upon participating delegations to reach an ambitious agreement without delay.

The declaration also recognizes the importance of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and stresses that science-based and innovative actions and international cooperation and partnerships based in science, technology and

innovation, in line with the precautionary approach and ecosystem-based approaches, contribute to the solutions necessary to overcome challenges in achieving Goal 14 through:

- informing integrated ocean management, planning, and decision making;
- restoring and maintaining fish stocks;
- preventing, reducing, and controlling marine pollution of all kinds, from both land- and sea-based sources; and
- developing and implementing measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and avert, minimize and address loss and damage, reducing disaster risk and enhancing resilience, including through increasing the use of renewable energy technologies, especially ocean-based technologies.

The declaration further commits to taking science-based and innovative actions on an urgent basis, recognizing developing countries, in particular SIDS and LDCs, to:

- strengthen international, regional, subregional and national scientific and systematic observation and data collection efforts;
- recognize the important role of Indigenous, traditional and local knowledge, innovation and practices of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities;
- establish effective partnerships;
- explore, develop and promote innovative financing solutions to drive the transformation to sustainable ocean-based economies;
- empower women and girls, as their full, equal and meaningful participation is key in progressing towards a sustainable ocean-based economy;
- ensure that people, especially children and youth, are empowered with relevant knowledge and skills for decision-making; and
- reduce emissions from international maritime transportation, especially shipping, as soon as possible.

The declaration commits to implementing voluntary commitments made in the context of the Conference and urges appropriate review and follow-up on progress on the voluntary commitments made in 2017. The declaration strongly calls upon the UN Secretary-General to continue efforts to support the implementation of SDG 14 by enhancing inter-agency coordination and coherence throughout the UN system on ocean issues, through the work of UN-Oceans.

Adoption of the Report and Closure of the Conference

On Friday afternoon, delegates adopted the report of the conference (A/CONF.230/2022/L.2).

COSTA RICA affirmed their offer to co-host the third UN Ocean Conference with France in 2025.

Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel, on behalf of UN Secretary-General Guterres, underlined the importance of the political declaration, calling on delegates to prioritize, *inter alia*:

- additional investment in coastal ecosystem restoration, centered on women;
- creation of more sustainable food systems;
- support for ocean science and traditional knowledge;
- protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030;
- transparent and accountable multi-stakeholder partnerships;
- new financing for the ocean; and
- scaling up support for developing countries.

In his closing remarks, speaking for Conference Co-President Uhuru Kenyatta, Keriako Tobiko, Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for Environment, underlined the need to keep the “Glasgow spirit” on climate finance alive, conclude negotiations on a high-seas treaty, and seriously consider the calls for a moratorium on deep seabed mining until “we are clear on the science.”

Conference Co-President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa stressed that the political declaration embodies the spirit of the UN, underlined the need to accord the youth the attention they deserve in decision making on the ocean, and gave the conference to a close at 6:00 pm.

A Brief Analysis of the Second UN Ocean Conference

We are the sea. We are the ocean. The ocean is in us.
Ancient proverb from the Pacific.

Eager to immerse themselves in the ever-more urgent task of saving our blue planet, delegates arrived in Lisbon, the beautiful “city of the sea,” after two years of conference delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the 2017 UN Ocean Conference, awareness of the need for action has only grown. Coral bleaching is spreading, marine species are shifting towards the poles due to climate change, the ocean has become more acidic, and there is more plastic waste than ever. Over the week, delegates met to produce three major outcomes: a political declaration, “Our Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility”; an updated registry of voluntary commitments; and key messages from plenary statements and partnership dialogues.

Memories of the surge of momentum and colorful events of the 2017 gathering, along with recent multilateral developments, gave participants some optimism as they arrived in Lisbon. The World Trade Organization, after over 20 years of negotiations, had just announced a decision on ending subsidies for destructive fishing practices. In March 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted a watershed decision that set the course for a global treaty on plastic pollution. Could major progress on two critical issues that were highlighted at the first UN Ocean Conference portend similar results from Lisbon?

The theme of the meeting seemed promising and appropriate: scale up ocean action, with a focus on science-based innovative solutions, to support implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14. Unlike other global environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity, and trade in endangered species, ocean governance occurs across a mix of international and regional instruments. The targets established under SDG 14 (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources) currently provide the most integrated framework for assessing progress on ocean action. The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) provided delegates with additional context for the conference.

This brief analysis assesses the progress made and challenges that persist for the successful implementation of SDG 14, including how this second conference differed from the first and the implications; how the issue of deep seabed mining seemed to generate attention and momentum; the gap between prioritizing marine science and the reality of financing it, especially for the stewards of the sea; the paradigm shift that recognizes the ocean as a significant solution

in addressing climate change; and upcoming meetings where the ambition expressed at the Ocean Conference could be reflected in the adoption of new multilateral agreements.

A New Port of Call

It didn't take long to realize that the second Ocean Conference would be a very different experience from its predecessor in New York. Missing from the opening was any culturally-based welcome or overtone. It might be hard to one-up the 2017 opening with Fijian kava, drums and dance, but the lack of a ceremonial launch seemed to signal this meeting would be strictly business and, for the most part, it was, at least until the end.

A few energy bursts occurred when, on Monday, applause heard outside the plenary hall indicated actor and United Nations Environment Programme Advocate for Life below Water Jason Momoa was in the house, and again on Thursday, when the unexpected arrival of French President Emmanuel Macron caused a stir. But otherwise, most of the buzz from the meeting occurred at side events both at, and especially away from, the Altice Arena. Each day more than 20 side events took place at the arena while as many or more were scattered across some 42 different locations in Lisbon. Even the father of the Ocean Conference, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean Peter Thomson, seemed to be "everywhere but" at any of the formal proceedings, only making an official appearance during the closing plenary. There were far more opportunities for in-depth dives into substantive areas than were possible in New York, but their dispersed locations meant that any sense of momentum didn't carry over into the chilly corridors of the Arena.

Noticeably absent were youth. One young representative was blunt during the closing plenary session, "Where is our seat at this table?" Despite the clear commitment to meaningfully include marginalized voices in decision making, statements by civil society were the only ones that felt the enforcement of time limits, cut off strictly at their three-minute mark. When youth delegates and other members of civil society were able to make their voices heard, one issue stood out: the need for a moratorium, or complete ban, on deep seabed mining.

Deep Uncertainty

Deep seabed mining is regulated under the International Seabed Authority (ISA) under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Currently, the ISA is negotiating exploitation regulations that could result in deep seabed mining as soon as 2023. Clear concerns persist about potential harm caused by the mining the ocean floor, including biodiversity interruption and loss, underwater noise, contaminants, and sediment plumes. The ISA's deliberations were noted with concern during both the general debate and the interactive dialogue on UNCLOS. It also was on the minds of marchers who protested outside the arena on Thursday afternoon, with signs that read "Keep it in the ground." One youth delegate called for a ban on seabed mining, saying, "It is not worth it; it is not worth the risk." Another challenged, "The decisions being made today directly affect our future. How can deep seabed mining be carried out for the benefit of mankind without involving young people? Are they common benefits if they only benefit the pockets of a few?" Her statement received strong applause, not all of it from the portion of the room occupied by NGOs and other stakeholders.

During the interactive dialogue on UNCLOS, a panelist opined that calls for a moratorium were coming from "non-actors," meaning non-state actors, rather than states with decision-making power. However, several countries did speak in clear support of a moratorium, requesting at least a pause until the appropriate science is established to properly inform protection measures, saying "there were still too many gaps in what we know," both about the deep sea, and the potential impacts of mining. Word filtered out that President Macron had surprised attendees at a side event at Lisbon's Oceanarium when he suggested a legal framework to stop deep seabed mining from going forward. The issue surfaced again in closing comments made on behalf of Conference Co-President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, saying that calls for a moratorium should be seriously considered "until we are clear on the science." If indeed, the conference generated a slow but growing swell of opposition to launching the first deep seabed mining operation without a closer review, this would be one of its most significant impacts.

Sea Salvation

Until recently, discussions on the nexus of the ocean to climate change have focused mostly on harmful impacts caused by warming seas. A shift in perspective emerged during the conference to embrace the ocean as a potential savior. During the plenary and dialogues, the power of the ocean to help solve the existential crisis of climate change was heard again and again. As one participant framed it, "It is about time we abandon the paradigm of seeking maximum sustainable use and see the ocean as a provider of solutions." Many speakers reminded those present that the ocean has saved the planet from more extreme impacts of greenhouse gas emissions by absorbing 90% of the excess heat in recent decades, serving as a carbon sink, but recognized that we are now at or beyond the capacity of the ocean to absorb our excesses. A researcher from the Galapagos put it simply when she said, "If we don't act now, we won't have any coral reefs left." Science-based solutions offered included coral restoration projects, harnessing the power of offshore energy to move away from fossil fuels, carbon sequestration, algae as biofuel, and seaweed as a low-input food source. The possibility of ocean-based technological approaches underscores the importance of science as precedent to solutions and will be a key area to watch during the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Another solution shared by many was establishing more marine protected areas (MPAs), most ardently supported by representatives from Pacific small island developing states. For them, the ancient practice of restricting access to fishing areas at certain times of the year, to allow fish stocks to recover, is one rooted in an understanding of the cycles of the ocean and the need to protect that which gives us life. Layered into this call was pressure to implement previous commitments, honor MPA boundaries, and report on the impacts of their establishment. The conference showed that what Pacific islanders have long known is now being embraced more widely, with more countries voicing support for the 30x30 target. "We know that creation of MPAs will not solve the ocean crisis," responded one participant, but they represent concrete steps forward. The question remains as to whether enough action will occur fast

enough to allow those who have long lived in harmony with the ocean and are helping navigate the way forward to still have an island to call home.

From Pledges to Pockets

By the close of the meeting, a number of commitments suggested there was more wind beneath the finance sails, but questions lingered about whether pledges for science-based innovative solutions would translate to meaningful assistance for the custodians of the ocean, especially since SDG 14 remains “the most underfinanced” of the 17 Global Goals. Access to existing finance also remains problematic and a number of small island developing states (SIDS)—yet again—called for shifting to a multidimensional vulnerability index to better reflect their unique vulnerability to external shocks, allowing easier access in times of trouble.

SIDS bear the brunt of climate change impacts on the ocean, from rising sea levels, higher proportions of their populations dependent on diminishing marine resources, and increased vulnerability to extreme weather events. While there were numerous references throughout the meeting to 2022 being the 40th anniversary of UNCLOS, one delegate noted that it also marked 40 years since Part XIV of the Convention established obligations to transfer marine technology to developing countries, including the establishment of marine centers, and eight years since the adoption of the SDGs, which renewed those commitments. “We remember the commitments,” he said, “and wait patiently for them to materialize, only to be disappointed.” A declaration put forth by AOSIS aimed to address that gap, calling for partnerships built on mutual learning and innovation that recognize SIDS as key partners rather than passive beneficiaries.

Sea Change?

Looking forward, Conference Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin noted the importance of the contribution of the Ocean Conference to the forthcoming UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The HLPF, following just days on the heels of the Ocean Conference, includes a second in-depth review of the implementation of SDG 14. This review should help highlight where progress has been made and where urgent action is lacking.

In addition to expressing support for rapid movement on a plastic pollution treaty, many delegations supported a new agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) and hoped that this treaty could be concluded by the end of the year. Also on the horizon is the December 2022 meeting of the Convention on Biodiversity, where parties are expected to adopt a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which will include a number marine-related targets.

In a surprise ending, delegates who still remained in plenary were treated to a musical performance by Kayamba Africa. If the intent was to communicate that “good things come to those who wait,” most delegates made clear throughout the meeting that we have waited far too long to act for the ocean. The next UN Ocean Conference will be held in 2025, co-hosted by France and Costa Rica. Will the words of John Kerry, US Climate Envoy, prove to be prophetic, that “If we do not respond to this, all this rhetoric, all these meetings will condemn us to the trash heap of history.” Or will we look back with hindsight at this conference and see progress on issues flagged in Lisbon?

Perhaps the most poignant of the calls heard during the week was by Vivian Balakrishnan from Singapore, speaking on why we have ocean governance: “The oceans existed before life existed and will be here even after life is no longer viable on Earth. It’s not about saving the ocean; it’s about how long humans can have a quality of life here. It’s about getting the balance right in this spirit of fairness and peace. Let’s settle it quickly and effectively because time is of the essence.”

Upcoming Meetings

HLPF 2022: The 2022 meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), will convene under the theme “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” The 2022 meeting will hold in-depth reviews of five SDGs: 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 14 (life below water), 15 (life on land), and 17 (partnerships for the Goals). **dates:** 5-7 and 11-15 July 2022 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** hlpf.un.org

27th Session of the International Seabed Authority Assembly and Council (Part II): At the 27th Session of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) Assembly and Council (Part II) representatives from its Member States will meet to discuss and formulate the work of the Authority and its Secretariat, including the draft exploitation regulations for deep seabed mining. **dates:** 18 July – 5 August 2022 **location:** Kingston, Jamaica **www:** isa.org.jm/node/20798/#block-media-2

Third Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Under the theme, “Building the Evidence Base for Synergistic Action in Support of Raising Climate and SDGs Ambition,” this conference is convened by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the UNFCCC Secretariat, and hosted by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, in partnership with the UN University (UNU) Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). It will consider the progress made over the last few years on synergistic action in raising climate ambition towards the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement while putting the world on the right track for achieving the SDGs by 2030. **dates:** 20-21 July 2022 **location:** Tokyo, Japan, and virtual **www:** un.org/en/climate-sdgs-conference-2022

Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on BBNJ (BBNJ IGC-5): The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction will continue negotiations on the international legally binding instrument. **dates:** 15-26 August 2022 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** un.org/bbnj/

The 7th International Marine Debris Conference (7IMDC): 7IMDC will bring together governments, industry, academia, civil society, and all relevant stakeholders, to discuss the latest science, strengthen collaborations, find solutions and catalyze action to address the urgent, global problem of marine litter and plastic pollution. **dates:** 18-23 September 2022 **location:** Busan, Republic of Korea **www:** ecopdecade.org/event/the-7th-international-marine-debris-conference-7imdc/

68th Meeting of the International Whaling Commission

(IWC68): The IWC was set up under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling to provide for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry. The meeting will be preceded by meetings of the IWC committees and sub-committees. **dates:** 17-21 October 2022 **location:** Portorož, Slovenia **www:** iwc.int/iwc68

27th Session of the International Seabed Authority Council

(Part III): The 27th Session of the ISA Council (Part III) will reconvene, subject to resources. **dates:** 31 October – 11 November 2022 (TBD) **location:** Kingston, Jamaica **www:** isa.org/jm/node/20798/#block-media-2

UNFCCC COP 27: The 27th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27), the 17th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 17), and the fourth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 4) will convene. **dates:** 6-18 November 2022 **location:** Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt **www:** unfccc.int/cop27

14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP14): The 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP14) will convene to adopt decisions to administer the Convention and guide its implementation. **dates:** 21-29 November 2022 **location:** Wuhan, China (TBC) **www:** ramsar.org/event/14th-meeting-of-the-conference-of-the-contracting-parties

Plastic Pollution INC-1: The first meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (Plastic Pollution INC-1) is being held pursuant to the resolution adopted by the resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2), which requests the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director to convene an INC to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. **dates:** 28 November – 2 December 2022 **location:** Uruguay **www:** unep.org/

UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP 15): This meeting, which includes the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD, the 10th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the 4th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, is scheduled to take place to review the achievement and delivery of the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. It is also expected to take a final decision on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, as well as decisions on related topics, including capacity building and resource mobilization. The first part took place in virtual format from 11-15 October 2021. **dates:** 5-17 December 2022 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **www:** cbd.int/meetings/COP-15

5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress

(IMPAC5): The 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) will bring together ocean conservation professionals to chart a course towards protecting 30% of the global ocean by 2030. IMPAC5 will be jointly hosted by the Host First Nations—xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish Nation), and səliłwətał (Tseil-waututh Nation)—together with the Province of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Its goals

include to provide an opportunity for countries to come together to develop a roadmap to a post-2020 biodiversity framework for ocean conservation and showcase the important role of marine protected areas in addressing the climate crisis and conserving biodiversity in a post-pandemic world. **dates:** 3-9 February 2023 **location:** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada **www:** impac5.ca/

Our Ocean Conference 2023: Panama will host representatives of governments, industry, civil society, and academia to discuss measures to protect the ocean, guarantee responsible management of marine resources and support sustainable economic growth. **dates:** March 2023 **location:** Panama **www:** TBC

UNEA-6: The meeting of the UN Environment Assembly sees the coming together of Member States of the UN, civil society, business and other stakeholders to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international law. **dates:** 26 February - 1 March 2024 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** unep.org/environmentassembly/about-united-nations-environment-assembly

Third UN Ocean Conference: The third UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, will be co-hosted by Costa Rica and France. **dates:** 2025 **location:** France **www:** TBC

For additional upcoming events, see sdg.iisd.org/

Glossary

AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island Developing States
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
BBNJ	Marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
ESCAP	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
ILBI	International legally binding instrument
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
LDCs	Least developed countries
MPA	Marine protected area
PSIDS	Pacific small island developing states
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
UNEA	UN Environment Assembly
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
WTO	World Trade Organization