

KEEPING THE MOMENTUM FOR OCEAN ACTION: Webinar series for 2021

“Implementing SDG 14 with the Communities of Ocean Action”

30th March 2021, 9:00-11:45AM (EDT, New York)

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE (17 March 2021)

BACKGROUND

The forthcoming Ocean Conference, co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Portugal, will come at a critical time as the world is strengthening its efforts to mobilize, create and drive solutions to realize the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 in the context of an ongoing global pandemic. How we respond to COVID-19 beyond the immediate and necessary recovery of health and livelihoods will likely determine not only whether we will reach SDG 14, but also how sustainable the world of tomorrow will be. The high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development: The 2017 Ocean Conference co-hosted by Fiji and Sweden paved the way for action oriented, science based innovative solutions aimed at reversing the decline in the health of our ocean for people, planet and prosperity.

At the 2017 conference, approximately 1,400 voluntary commitments (VC) for concrete action to advance implementation of SDG 14 were made by Member States, the UN system, and an array of stakeholders including civil society, the private sector and academia. To date, over 1,600 VCs are registered online¹ and the registry of voluntary commitments remain open. These commitments were one of the major outcomes of the conference and marked a global breakthrough on the path to sustainable management and conservation of our oceans, seas and marine resources. To follow-up on the implementation of these voluntary commitments as well as to catalyze and generate new ones, the UN launched nine thematic multi-stakeholder Communities of Ocean Action (COA) of which are closely aligned with the targets of SDG14².

Recently, an online survey on the implementation of VCs published on the Ocean Conference Registry was carried out to get an update on the achievements and challenges as well as to receive suggestions on its implementation. The assessment of the impact of these commitments based on the survey and other available information, concluded that the VCs have collectively furthered the attainment of SDG 14. Nevertheless, various challenges to their implementation have been reported such as, the lack of resources, funding, technical expertise, partner cooperation as well as political environment. Furthermore, the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic that broke out last year has further exacerbated challenges in the implementation of the VCs. This webinar will take a look at the status of implementation of the VCs as well as the impacts of the COVID- 19.

¹ <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/>

² The nine thematic Communities of Ocean Action are: Coral reefs, Implementation of international law as reflected in UNCLOS, Mangroves, Marine and coastal ecosystems management, Marine pollution, Ocean acidification, Scientific knowledge, research capacity development and transfer of marine technology, Sustainable blue economy, Sustainable fisheries

OBJECTIVES

- To get an update on the implementation of the VCs by each COA by stock-taking of progress and identify gaps and challenges as well as to share best practice and lessons.
- To examine how the impact of the COVID 19 has impeded the implementation of SDG 14 and ensure that the Ocean considered as a priority amidst recovery efforts.
- Maintain the momentum on ocean action ahead of the upcoming UNOC that was postponed in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

FORMAT

The webinar will have an opening session which will include remarks from the co-hosts of the United Nations Ocean Conference, Portugal and Kenya; the Special Envoy for the Ocean, H.E. Ambassador Peter Thomson; Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs and Conference Secretary General, United Nations Ocean Conference, Lisbon, and Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under Secretary General for Legal Affairs and Special Adviser on Ocean and legal matters to the Co-Presidents of the Ocean Conference. The session will be followed by a presentation on the recent assessment of the impact analysis of VCs as well as an update of the work on each COAs by respective co-focal points.

PROGRAMME

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Time	Session
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Opening of the virtual platform and technical testing (For speakers and panelists only)
9.00- 9:30	<p>OPENING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening/Setting the stage: Ambassador Peter Thomson, Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean • H.E. Ambassador Duarte Lopes, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations • H.E. Ambassador Martin Kimani, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations/Ambassador Njambi Kinyungu, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations • Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs and Conference Secretary General United Nations Ocean Conference, Lisbon; (COA on SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY) • Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, United Nations Legal Counsel and Special Adviser on Ocean and legal matters to the Co-presidents of the United Nations Ocean Conference, Lisbon; (COA on IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AS REFLECTED IN UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA)

9:30- 10:10	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Presentation on “An assessment of impacts of the Ocean Conference Voluntary Commitment” by Dr. Marjo Vierros , Director, Coastal Policy and Humanities Research
10:10-11:30	<p>PANEL: Implementation status and update on the progress of COA (7min each)</p> <p>Dr. Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO: (COA on SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER OF MARINE TECHNOLOGY)</p> <p>Ms. Janis Searles Jones, CEO Ocean Conservancy: (COA on MARINE POLLUTION)</p> <p>Mr. David Cooper, Deputy Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity: (COA on MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT)</p> <p>Mr. Manuel Barange, Director, Fisheries Division, FAO: (COA on SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES)</p> <p>Mr. Peter Swarzenski, Section Head, Radioecology Laboratory (REL), Monaco, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): (COA on OCEAN ACIDIFICATION)</p> <p>COA on CORAL REEFS (TBC)</p> <p>COA on MANGROVES (TBC)</p> <p>DISCUSSION (Q&A)</p>
11:30-11:45	<p>CLOSING</p> <p>H.E. Ambassador Satyendra Prasad, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations</p> <p>H.E. Ambassador Anna Karin Eneström, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations</p>

PARTICIPATION

The webinar will be open to all and conducted in English.