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Social Affairs

2022 United Nations Ocean Conference  
Global Online Stakeholder  
Consultation for the Concept  
Papers of Interactive Dialogues

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# SUMMARY REPORT

March 2022



This summary report was prepared based on inputs collected from stakeholders from several sectors by the Division of Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

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# Background

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Pursuant to General Assembly [decision 75/578](#) of 9 September 2021, the [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](#) will be held from 27 June to 1 July 2022, in Lisbon, Portugal. The overall theme of the Conference is: “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions”.

The modalities resolution for the 2022 UN Ocean Conference ([A/RES/73/292](#)) calls for the involvement of all relevant stakeholders bringing together Governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, other interested international bodies, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and other actors to assess challenges and opportunities relating to, as well as actions taken towards, the implementation of SDG 14.

The programme of the 2022 UN Ocean Conference will include **eight interactive dialogues** which will be collaborative and multi-stakeholder in nature and will focus on recommendations to support the implementation of SDG 14, including through strengthened cooperation, building on existing successful partnerships and stimulating innovative and concrete new ones, taking into account the theme of the Conference.

In early 2020, stakeholders were invited to contribute inputs on elements for the 2022 UN Ocean Conference declaration as well as the themes for the interactive dialogues for the 2022 UN Ocean Conference. All inputs are available [here](#). Additionally, stakeholders were invited to provide inputs to the concept papers on each of the themes of the interactive dialogues in early 2020. A total of 184 stakeholders' submissions were received. Details are available [here](#).

# Global Online Stakeholder Consultation: Inputs to update the concept papers of the 2022 UN Ocean Conference Interactive Dialogues



Taking into account the evolving landscape and new challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, stakeholders were invited to contribute inputs to update the concept papers of the eight interactive dialogues of the Conference through a [global online stakeholder consultation](#) which was held from 4 to 21 February 2022. Information about the global consultation was broadly disseminated through mailing lists, UN official websites, social media channels and a [dedicated webpage](#).

Stakeholders were invited to provide inputs on the latest COVID-19 related data and analysis considering status and trends, challenges and opportunities, possible areas for new partnerships as well as recommendations on advancing implementation of SDG 14.

Stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and other actors were all invited to provide inputs on each of the eight themes of the [interactive dialogues](#) of the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference, as listed below:

1. Addressing marine pollution;
2. Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems;
3. Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming;
4. Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets;
5. Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies in particular for small island developing States and least developed countries;
6. Increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology;
7. Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;
8. Leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

## Questions

Under each theme of the eight interactive dialogues, stakeholders were invited to provide inputs through dedicated online forms to three questions:

*1. Considering the latest COVID-related data and analysis, what are the main trends, challenges and opportunities?*

*2. Considering the latest COVID-related data, what are possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14?*

*3. Considering the latest COVID-related data, what are main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14?*

## Outcomes

A total of 330 inputs were received from interested stakeholders. Of the 330 received inputs, **315 submissions** contained substantive elements analyzed in this report. The detailed responses received under each theme are available for public viewing through the links listed below.

All inputs submitted by stakeholders are publicly available and can be consulted at this website: [bit.ly/EConsultationOceanConference2022](https://bit.ly/EConsultationOceanConference2022).

Themes	Outcomes of the Online Consultation
1. Addressing marine pollution	<a href="https://bit.ly/MarinePollutionResponse">bit.ly/MarinePollutionResponse</a>
2. Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems	<a href="https://bit.ly/EcosystemsResponses">bit.ly/EcosystemsResponses</a>
3. Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming	<a href="https://bit.ly/OceanWarmingResponse">bit.ly/OceanWarmingResponse</a>
4. Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets	<a href="https://bit.ly/FisheriesResponse">bit.ly/FisheriesResponse</a>
5. Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for small island developing States and least developed countries	<a href="https://bit.ly/OceanBasedEconomiesResponse">bit.ly/OceanBasedEconomiesResponse</a>
6. Increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology	<a href="https://bit.ly/MarineTechnologyResponse">bit.ly/MarineTechnologyResponse</a>

7. Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea	<a href="https://bit.ly/IntLawResponse">bit.ly/IntLawResponse</a>
8. Leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.	<a href="https://bit.ly/Goal14And2020AgendaResponse">bit.ly/Goal14And2020AgendaResponse</a>

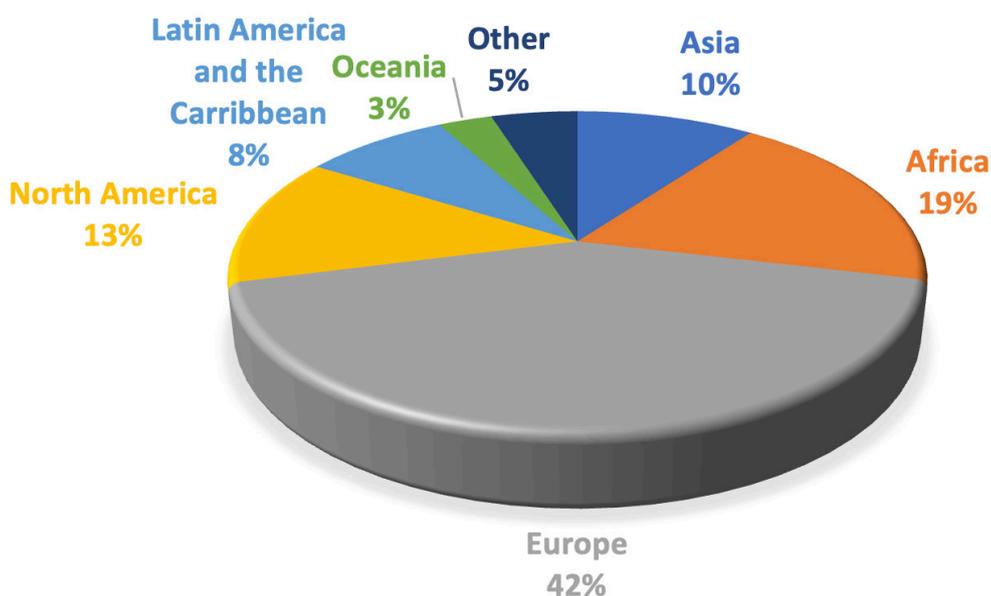


Figure 1: Distribution of submissions per region. Source: UN DESA

Contributions originated from all six regions of the world, with the following distribution (Figure 1): Europe – 42%, Africa – 19%, North America – 13%, Asia – 10%, Latin America and the Caribbean – 8%, Other – 5% and Oceania – 3%.

Stakeholders from **54 countries** submitted contributions (Figure 2): Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa,

Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States of America and Zambia.

The majority of stakeholders contributing to the online consultation self-identified as representing Non-Governmental Organizations (57%). Other sectors include: Other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development (18%); Education & Academic Entities (7%); Science & Technological community (6%); Business & Industry (6%); Private philanthropic Organization (2%); Children & Youth (1%); Workers & Trade Unions (1%); Farmers (1%); Volunteer Groups (1%) and Women Organizations (<1%).



Figure 2: Geographic distribution of submissions. Source: UN DESA

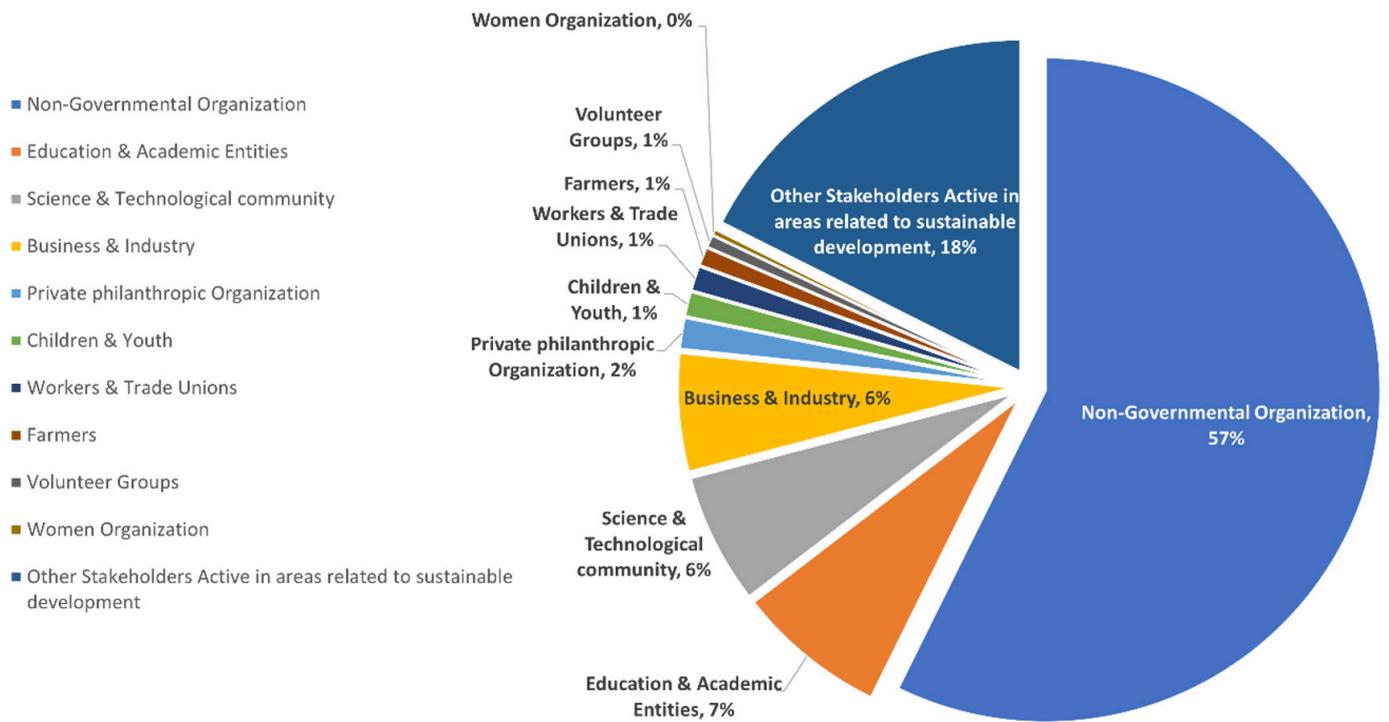


Figure 3: Distribution of submissions per sector. Source: UN DESA

With regards to gender, 64% of contributors self-identified as female, followed by 33% male and 3% preferred not to say (Figure 4).

With regards to age, 24% of submissions were provided by youth (between 18 and 34 years old).

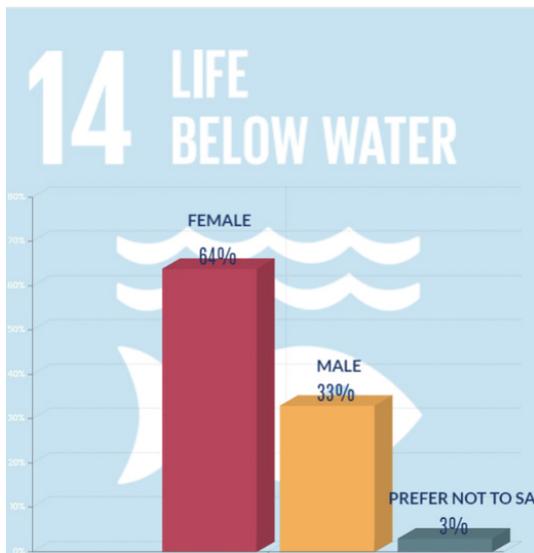


Figure 4: Gender distribution of submissions. Source: UN DESA

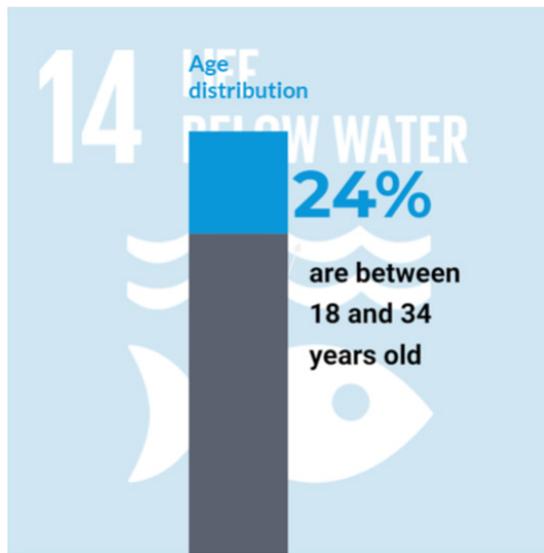


Figure 5: Age distribution of submissions. Source: UN DESA

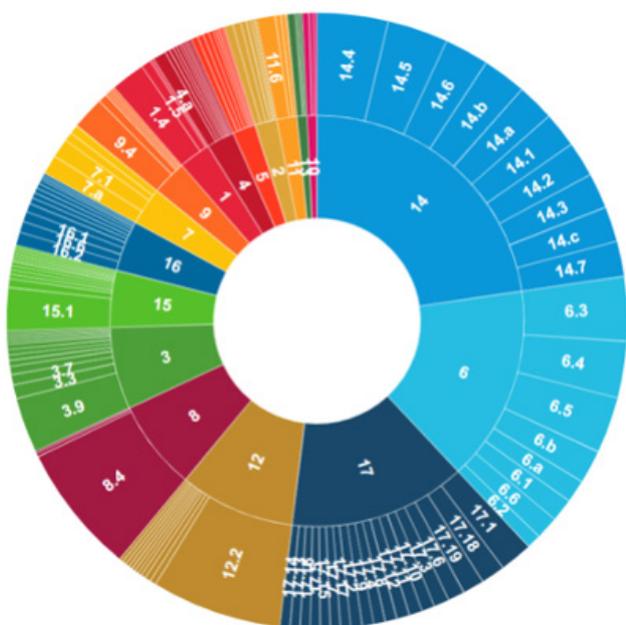


Fig.6 Reflection of linkage to most relevant SDGs based on inputs (created by [LinkedSDGs](#))

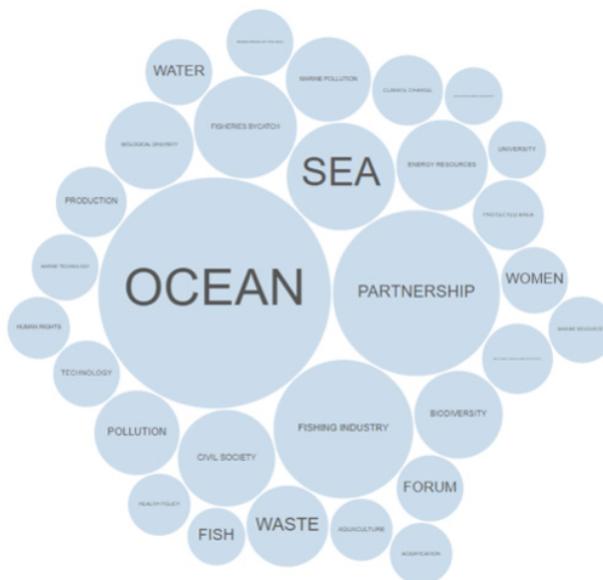


Fig.7 World cloud based on inputs (created by [LinkedSDGs](#))

# Summary of the Global Online Stakeholder Consultation

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The following sections will bring an in-depth summary of the main takeaways under each theme from the online consultation. Each summary is categorized into three sections to reflect the most relevant inputs to the three proposed questions.

A few quotations are featured in the report as well as some examples of ocean action shared by stakeholders through the consultation forms.



Source: Ishan Seefromthesky on Unsplash



## Interactive Dialogue 1 Addressing Marine Pollution

Source: UN Twitter

Under this topic, contributions from 65 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Multiple stakeholders identified that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in **increased marine litter pollution**, due to the increased use of single-use plastics through disposable equipment, residential waste as well as its improper disposal. Nonetheless, some stakeholders also identified opportunities resulting from the pandemic, including the increased interest of governments on investing in green economies as part of recovery plans, as well as the fact that coastal communities are becoming more aware and protective of their own resources and surroundings.

*“African, Asian and Amazon local communities are still to come to terms with the reality of COVID-19. The key challenge here is that most international and national measures put in place are not respected in the local communities particularly coastal communities. This is also because of limited available resources (finance, human, materials) by both government and civil society organisations in reaching out to the locals.” (Ajesh, Cameroon)*

Many stakeholders expressed their concern for the contribution of certain industries to marine pollution, including, for instance, the fashion industry due to its plastic and chemical waste and the fishing industry due to abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear (ALDFG). Concerns about the negative impacts of marine pollution on the productivity of aquaculture, including the effects on small-scale fisheries and women, were mentioned. Furthermore, stakeholders called attention to shipping traffic being another source of pollution to the marine environment, generating noise as well as waste discharges.

*“The world has always dealt with waste in one of three ways, we bury the waste, burn it, or throw it away for someone else to deal with. Because*

*of this approach all waste inevitably finds its way into the world's oceans.” (Peoples Plastic Revolution Limited, United Kingdom)*

To address marine pollution, stakeholders stressed **the need for sustainable production and consumption of plastics**. This could be reached through an increase of recycling and circular economy efforts, a zero-plastic policy at all levels of supply chains, global unified legislation, and the uptake of secondary alternative raw materials. In addition, calls were made for the enforcement of the “Polluter Pays Principles” and a consumer’s right to green consumption.

Stakeholders highlighted windows of opportunity to address marine pollution. The increase of electric vessels was noted as a step closer to the decarbonization of sea transport. The **promotion of innovation and “Ecopreneurship”** were also highlighted. In addition, stakeholders called for establishing an international negotiating committee for agreement on the elimination of new marine pollutants, and standardizing plastic credits by way of incentivizing the collection and recycling of plastic waste.

*Investment in plastic waste collection and recycling activities through the purchase of plastic credits can help companies achieve net circularity and contribute to SDG 14.” (Verra, Thailand)*

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Many stakeholders highlighted the need to establish and **strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships** to address marine pollution. Stakeholders identified possible areas for new partnerships, such as in reducing the use and trade of plastics, generating funding for efficient waste and circularity systems as well as implementing sustainable sea transport. There were also calls for partnerships at the regional level to reinforce regional seas action plans.

Stakeholders flagged the importance of working on upcycling marine plastics which both helps removing waste from the marine environment and repurposing the materials to limit manufactured materials and production waste. Through **sharing best practices and exchange of technical assistance and equipment**, new partnerships to advance on tackling marine pollution should be identified.

The importance of civil society's participation in partnerships, including the involvement of women, youth, community-based and local organizations, was highlighted by stakeholders. In addition, the need for increased collaboration with industry, science, and technology companies was emphasized to address pollution at the source, avoid hazardous material and waste, and to create products with circular designs. Stakeholders proposed to **increase global awareness** on issues relating to marine pollution partnerships through social media and involve the networks of influential figures.

*"Everyone, from industry to consumers, has a role to play in reducing plastic pollution and its impacts on the environment." (Pew Charitable Trust, United States)*

## **Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14**

Stakeholders identified a wide range of recommendations to address marine pollution. Stakeholders predominantly mentioned the urgent need to reduce marine pollution, including a reduction of fuel consumption, shipping emissions and countermeasures against global contamination such as chemical and biological pollution. Furthermore, marine noise and plastic pollution must be addressed by providing **resources and incentives** for ocean users to do so, according to stakeholders. Many stakeholders called for an innovative waste management system with the principles of recycling, reusing, and reducing.

Stakeholders stressed the importance of monitoring, reporting, and compliance mechanisms of marine pollution, including the assessment of water quality, plastics, and ocean sound. Many stakeholders called attention to the necessity of further research and development in plastic substitutes.

Furthermore, stakeholders emphasized the importance of implementing and enforcing existing international laws and policies that can contribute to reduced plastic production and consumption, as well as the need to promote a new global and legally binding plastics treaty.



**Interactive Dialogue 2**  
**Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring**  
**marine and coastal ecosystems**



Source: Mohamed Sameeh on Unsplash

Under this topic, contributions from 68 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the **decline of tourism activities and incomes** was a focus of several stakeholders' inputs. Some stakeholders claimed that even though rules and measures have been established, coastal authorities are often not able to effectively manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems due to a **lack of financial resources and data**. Some stakeholders underlined that due to paused projects and postponed or cancelled forums, little progress has been made in multilateral decision-making concerning the management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems. Nonetheless, some stakeholders considered that COVID-19 restrictions of movement may have led to a decrease in pollution by shipping activities.

Multiple stakeholders expressed their concerns on the lack of participation of local stakeholders in the management of coastal and marine ecosystems, and urged to integrate the knowledge of indigenous people, women, youth and local communities. The needs for **multi-level and multi-sector governance** and coordinating involvement of national, regional and local actors were identified as a critical element for the enforcement of coastal restoration projects.

Stakeholders further expressed concerns over the increasing rate of **illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities**. Overfishing, bottom-trawling, turtle poaching and bycatch were seriously threatening marine ecosystems, damaging seabed, and leading to significant biodiversity loss.

Stakeholders also reflected on the establishment of **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** and noted the insufficiency of MPAs surveillance and that MPAs should be extended and adequately funded. Stakeholders referred also to the

potential of transboundary MPAs and different level MPAs, such as "No Take Zones" or "Highly protected Areas".

In relation to opportunities, stakeholders identified fishery, shipping and mining activities as key areas to be prioritized in the sustainable management and the restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems. In addition, they also underlined the importance of investing in digital resources and the blue economy, as well as exchanging of good practices and lessons learned.

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Stakeholders urged to strengthen partnerships with **community-based organizations**, such as local CSOs and NGOs, scientists and academia, indigenous people, youth and women. One input suggested to organize participatory workshops and local collaborative forums to advance meaningful stakeholder engagement.

*"[...] A top-down, technocratic approach will not be helpful. We need to empower local communities to drive this agenda and support the democratization of management, conservation, and restoration processes." (Jesuit Justice and Ecology Network Africa, Kenya)*

In addition, fishery and tourism workers were considered as essential partners in the management and conservation of ecosystems by stakeholders. Moreover, some stakeholders indicated that partnerships with the private sector, in particular the maritime industry, could unfold through carbon credits practice.

*"Governments should be encouraged to consider partnerships with a range of local stakeholders including local communities, NGOs and the private sector (particularly tourism operators). Co-management or participatory management arrangements should be established to give all stakeholders a voice." (Reef Check Malaysia, Malaysia)*

## Ocean Action Example

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The Medfund is a non-profit organization aimed at improving the effectiveness of management of Marine Protected Areas around the Mediterranean basin (including France, Monaco and Tunisia). It has been operating since 2015 in cooperation with NGOs and national authorities to provide funding for marine ecosystems conservation. (Highlighted by the Mediterranean Protected Areas Network (MedPAN), France)

*“Productive sectors (fisheries, agriculture, tourism) should be approached as allies in the conservation efforts. Improved ocean, marine protected areas and marine species governance demands substantial interactions between the systems. By creating bridges opportunities could appear.” (Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador)*

Multiple stakeholders highlighted the potential of **networking among MPAs** by setting up management agreements for MPAs. Stakeholders suggested that jointly designed strategies for MPAs could strengthen further efforts in the protection and conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems.

In relation to **knowledge exchange**, some stakeholders emphasized how cooperation among governments was critical to share, ameliorate and replicate marine management plans. Stakeholders stressed that knowledge exchange could support coastal communities facing complex challenges, such as the collection of waste in coastal cities.

### Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

*“We want to see frontline ocean communities prioritized and protected, with conservation measures ensuring better health, higher quality of life, and sustainable economic opportunity. To make this an everyday part of our economies and*

*financial systems, and to ensure sustainability of blue economy endeavors, we need to work toward healthy ocean outcomes upstream as well.” (Citizens' Climate International, United States)*

A prominent call for **cross-sectoral coordination and multilevel cooperation** through financial and regulatory tools was featured in several inputs. The importance of having new management arrangements and frameworks that enable broad participation of non-governmental actors were highlighted throughout the online consultation. Sensitization campaigns directed at local communities was mentioned as a great tool to increase commitments and environmental practices.

Other notable recommendations by stakeholders include: establishing an **active science-policy interface**; building **knowledge-sharing networks** where comprehensive learning approaches can be adopted for conservation and restoration practices; **using data, scientific information and prototyping** experimentation to support more informed decision-making and developing a **Vulnerability Index For Sea Level Rise** in threatened coastal ecosystems to guide governments in funding allocation for risk mitigation solutions.



**Interactive Dialogue 3**  
**Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification,  
deoxygenation and ocean warming**

Source: L. W. on Unsplash

Under this topic, contributions from 22 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Stakeholders expressed their concerns over the **rising global CO2 and greenhouse gas emissions**, which cause ocean deoxygenation, ocean warming and salinity alterations. As the usage of fossil fuels in commercial and other types of maritime transport imposes heavy impact on the ocean's health, multiple stakeholders stressed the importance of finding alternative energy supplies for maritime transports. Due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, commercial maritime transports have decreased. Stakeholders suggested that this has contributed to the temporary reduction of CO2 emissions and alleviation of ocean warming.

Stakeholders called for stronger international efforts and action to protect and restore the ocean's health. Stakeholders noted the imbalance of geographical representation at international ocean-related forums and stressed the importance of more **inclusive and balanced participation** at such forums, including the need to offer more opportunities for the less/least developed countries.

*"The rise of virtual meetings and webinars [...] allowed information from different countries/regional conditions to reach the global community, potentially fostering future collaborations and new research ideas." (Centro de Ciências do Mar (CCMAR), Portugal)*

Several stakeholders also expressed their concerns regarding the vulnerability of scientific observation systems in less developed countries to monitor coastal and marine areas.

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

In addition to the call for new partnerships,

stakeholders also emphasized the importance to strengthen the existing partnership frameworks.

**Aquaculture** was identified by several stakeholders as a key area to engage partners across governments, NGOs, the private sector, academia and local communities.

Stakeholders stressed the importance of having **common frameworks**, such as the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#), to ensure and foster science-policy connection. The connection between ocean issues and climate change was also highlighted by stakeholders who shared their proposals on establishing interlinkages between multiple on-topic forums.

Stakeholders also agreed on the necessity to transform major maritime industries to match sustainability patterns. There were calls for an international treaty on **decarbonization of transports** including the maritime sector and the need for further international cooperation and assistance on technology was stressed.

Furthermore, stakeholders flagged that **North-South cooperation** is fundamental to address ocean issues and to achieve SDG 14. Many contributors confirmed the positive impact of virtual webinars and workshops held during the COVID-19 pandemic, which enabled broader worldwide participation.

## Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

*"Under the uncertain economic climate brought about by the pandemic, it is critical to stimulate a greater investment by governments worldwide into sustained, long-term monitoring of their coastal waters (and beyond) and also support for international observing networks [...] and a commitment to international efforts to make data fair." (Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO), United Kingdom)*

## Ocean Action Example

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The [Australian Seaweed Institute](#) is developing seaweed biofilters in selected locations throughout the Great Barrier Reef region for buffering ocean acidification and for the healthy conservation of reefs. (Highlighted by Australian Seaweed Institute, Australia)

Stakeholders strongly agreed that greenhouse gas emissions need to be kept under control and ideally achieve a net zero CO<sub>2</sub> balance. Stakeholders advocated for strong **financial and technical support** to low- or zero-carbon maritime transports relying on alternative and renewable energy. To encourage this transition, an agreement on sustainable industry practices through incentives-grants was suggested. Multiple stakeholders recommended establishing frameworks for decarbonization of various industries, including energy supply, shipping activities and tourism.

Assistance in **capacity development, awareness-raising and knowledge sharing** was considered essential by many stakeholders. Accordingly, stakeholders stressed the need for common monitoring systems on the ocean, covering more geographical areas and assessment of the impact on biodiversity. Stakeholders stressed the importance of **investments in the blue economy**. New technologies on ocean-marine resources' exploitation, blue food forms production, aquaculture and

increasing the number of strictly protected marine and coastal areas were among the critical recommendations to address the effects of ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming.



**Interactive Dialogue 4**  
**Making fisheries sustainable and providing**  
**access for small-scale artisanal fishers to**  
**marine resources and markets**

Under this topic, contributions from 45 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

According to multiple stakeholders, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions substantially disrupted fishery activities and seafood affordability due to the forced closure of local fish markets. Stakeholders also noted the obstructed access to marine resources and markets for small-scale fishers, due to a shortage of manpower, financial and digital resources.

Stakeholders agreed on the fact that fishing cooperatives were not endowed with sufficient **institutional capacity and data** to face national and global markets' demands and challenges. In addition, stakeholders indicated that the majority of global subsidies went to large-scale fishing companies, to the detriment of small-scale artisanal fishers. Some contributors expressed concerns about overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, bycatch and climate-change related degradation of near-shore marine zones, which all put **hardship on small-scale fishers' livelihood**. In relation to post-fish harvesting, stakeholders provided that small scale fishers were often not adequately equipped with storage and hygiene facilities to keep their

products aligned with established standards of conformity, neither were they informed of nor familiar with marketing opportunities to be real competitors in wider markets.

*"The pandemic has illustrated the importance of small-scale fisheries and local supply chains for food security. It also showed fisheries subsidies are skewed to large scale, fuel intensive fishing operations with devastating impacts on marine biodiversity and the climate. Post-pandemic support for recovery should therefore target low-impact, small-scale fishing operations to facilitate a just transition to low impact fisheries." (Seas at Risk, Belgium)*

In relation to sustainable fishing, many stakeholders reminded its **connection to gender equality**, including the challenges women face in their attempts to engage in the fishery sector and supply chains.

With a particular focus on opportunities, the **involvement of young fishers** in research and stewardship activities was mentioned. Some stakeholders discussed the benefits of strengthening fishers' cooperative groups by providing assistance for infrastructure and hygiene facilities. Regarding fishing monitoring and data, it was indicated that some progress has been made by global and national NGOs and civil society collaborations to **standardize seafood labeling**.

### Ocean Action Example

GSSI Seafood MAP is a digital platform to collect and accelerate fisheries and aquaculture efforts towards sustainability. Through connecting producers and consumers, it allows to evaluate the impact of commitments and enables opportunities for further progress to align fishery practices with the SDGs. (Highlighted by World Benchmarking Alliance, Germany)

## Possible areas for news partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Throughout the online consultation, stakeholders stressed **multistakeholder participation** as a necessary element of effective partnerships. Many stakeholders advocated for **public-private partnerships** delivering substantial funds, tools and assistance to small-scale artisanal fishers. Through these collaborations, stakeholders argued, small-scale artisanal fishers could obtain the necessary assets to align fishery equipment with sustainability and noted that this assistance would strengthen artisanal fishers' competitiveness and resilience in the fishing markets. The need for capacity-building, including training and infrastructure, was also highlighted.

**Legal empowerment** was also mentioned by many stakeholders, and they advocated for stronger involvement of women and youth associations to ensure their rights in the fishery supply chains. Stakeholders pointed out that **small-scale fishers** represent a considerable constituency in the fishery sector but still tend to be excluded from management decision-making at all levels. Some inputs highlighted insecure frameworks on tenure rights and the lack of transparency in fisheries management as relevant obstacles.

*"[...] meetings involving fishermen, women fishmongers, youth and technical fisheries officials storage are highly required to agree and propose administration and management rules, so as to rescue fishery stock as well as to improve the economic wellbeing and food security of the fishery community and the larger region." (T4NA, Burundi)*

Multiple stakeholders recommended **cross-sectoral awareness raising initiatives**. For instance, some offered their support to coordinated campaigning and communication efforts, and suggested knowledge exchange on sustainable fishing practices and technological innovations through digital networks.

## Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

The majority of recommendations aimed at **strengthening the capacity of artisanal fishers**, through **investments in infrastructure, skills and innovation**. Many inputs also recommended the inspection of fishery equipment and the creation of **fishing data platforms**.

Stakeholders reiterated the need to involve many sectors of society in decision-making processes, and highlighted the importance of including fish producers, marketers, and consumers in administration and management issues. The involvement of artisanal fishers in research and knowledge-related activities was underlined as an important measure to foster knowledge exchange and inform policy making on the path towards sustainability.

Furthermore, participants stressed the urgent need to address the challenge of IUU fishing. Some stakeholders advocated for the establishment of **artisanal exclusive fishing zones** and prioritization of small-scale fishers in the allocation of quotas and licenses.



**Interactive Dialogue 5**  
**Promoting and strengthening sustainable**  
**ocean-based economies, in particular for Small Island**  
**Developing States and least developed countries**

Source: Kevin Kyburz on Unsplash



Under this topic, contributions from 27 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Many stakeholders emphasized the increased negative impacts on ocean-based economies, in particular for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs), caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. **Difficulties for the fishing-dependent communities and the tourism industry** were widely mentioned. In addition, stakeholders provided that the tourism sector itself is also perceived as a challenge to sustainable ocean-based economies due to its high carbon footprint.

The **negative impacts of climate change** on coastal communities who directly face the consequences of sea-level rise, including coastal erosion, flooding, and land salinization, were highlighted by many stakeholders as a challenge to promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies too. Stakeholders also called attention to the negative impact of **extreme weather events** on biodiversity and agriculture, causing the increase of social and economic pressure, as well as the urgent need for climate mitigation and adaptation.

*“COVID-19 and environmental emergencies are putting islands at higher risks. Their vulnerabilities rank higher in every sector and cross-sectors cumulative effects - specifically the ones due to the evolutions of tourism, and the more extreme weather events - need a new holistic and territorial path from vulnerabilities to resilience.” (Green Cross France et Territoires, France)*

Furthermore, stakeholders flagged several prioritized areas for SIDS and LDCs, such as food security, education and health, among others. Establishing an effective **infrastructure for waste management** and recycling, collecting reliable data, supporting access to affordable green financing, and creating sustainable markets were also identified as crucial issues for SIDS and LDCs.

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Stakeholders see opportunities for promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies in the **blue economy**, which refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources while preserving the health of ocean ecosystems. Stakeholders identified gaps between countries with regards to their social, technological and financial capacities to establish sustainable blue economies. These challenges should be overcome through **institutional transformation and cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships** on a national and international level.

*“A blue economy provides SIDS and coastal LDCs with a basis to pursue a low-carbon and resource-efficient path to economic growth and development designed to enhance livelihoods for the poor, create employment opportunities, and reduce poverty.” (CT University, India)*

Stakeholders stressed the importance of sustainable food production, including by ensuring a balance between the food supply for tourists and the local population. Stakeholders also emphasized that **investing in a blue food system** can help in addressing malnutrition and support low-carbon food production.

In addition, stakeholders flagged how the ocean has enormous potential for renewable energy and stressed the need for partnerships to facilitate **energy transition**.

*“The ocean offers substantial sustainable resources for renewable energy production, among which: offshore wind, tidal currents, waves, temperature and salinity gradients, deep cold sea water.” (OASIS, Serbia)*

Furthermore, stakeholders stressed the need for **multi-stakeholder dialogues and co-designing solutions**. Stakeholders also called for enhanced partnerships between the Global North and the Global South, as well as integrating local

partners and coastal communities. Several stakeholders emphasized the importance of involving the private sector and investment organizations more in promoting sustainable ocean-based economies.

*“Good practices and information sharing needs to be promoted on various issues including sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, blue carbon, blue tourism, decarbonization in the fishery and maritime sectors, and blue finance.” (Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan)*

## **Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14**

The **regeneration and conservation of aquatic ecosystems** was highlighted by many stakeholders. Stakeholders stressed the need for sustainable fishing, including fair fishing agreements, regenerating mangroves and coral reefs, and reducing fossil fuel consumption. Further recommendations include reducing malnutrition by investing in diverse blue foods, collecting data about blue foods production and consumption, as well as improving energy efficiency and management through the implementation of net-zero emissions.

A number of stakeholders mentioned the need for adaptation as a result of climate change. Dynamic and hybrid adaptation strategies should be implemented, and coastal resilience must be built. Stakeholders emphasized the **need for digital tools and technologies for ocean governance**, and expertise guidelines to strengthen the resilience against extreme weather events caused by climate change.

*“Ecosystem's restoration and conservation along with sustainable production, low carbon and high-quality production standards will be not only the “seat belt” for future crises (including climate change impacts) but the insurance policy for local wellbeing and resilience.” (Centro de Especialistas en Gestión Ambiental (CEGAM), Mexico)*

Stakeholders also mentioned that strengthening of ocean-based economies should be aligned with **human rights standards**.

*“Strategies for strengthening ocean-based economies must be aligned with human rights standards and take adequate considerations towards population groups dependent on coastal ecosystems and marine resources.” (The Danish Institute for Human Rights, Denmark)*



**Interactive Dialogue 6**  
**Increasing scientific knowledge and developing**  
**research capacity and transfer of marine technology**

Under this topic, contributions from 33 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available for viewing [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Stakeholders highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic forced the science community to **change its methodologies for research activities**, including by limiting data acquisition practices and other field operations. Moreover, the pandemic prompted a **reduction in funds allocated to research**. Nevertheless, stakeholders emphasized that remote research has been successful in community networking, knowledge sharing, and has allowed to unfold **online capacity-building** sessions and low-cost research kits.

In analyzing trends of scientific knowledge management, some stakeholders indicated a considerable increase of knowledge exchange, scientists' collaborative consultation and engagement in multiple research projects.

*"Enhancing the skills and the knowledge base of academics, scientists, managers, field practitioners and local communities is critical – and this has become easier with the advent of online media of education through COVID-19 Pandemic." (MUN Impact, India)*

Stakeholders expressed that the **lack of virtual technology and digital applications** in low-income countries is putting a hardship on knowledge management and transfer. Even virtual tools can have significant benefits to increase knowledge, such as a broader outreach and smaller costs, stakeholders claimed that they should be promoted and developed in all countries to avert inequalities. In addition, contributors expressed their concerns not only over inequality of digital resources but also on the availability of funds, budgets, and expertise.

*"The SSF sector understands the urgency of the use of technologies and adapting to the digital world with the aim of participating in*

*social, economic and cultural processes. But it is also concerned about being left behind in this transformation." (Comunidad y Biodiversidad A.C. (COBI), Mexico)*

Apart from investment in research, stakeholders also reflected on the opportunity to **foster interest of young students in ocean-related knowledge** promoting focused education programs at schools and funding scholarships on education and training.

Multiple submissions referred to the lack of free access to information in public datasets. Stakeholders also stressed the fact that the available data do not encompass all marine areas, leading to **knowledge gaps** and imprecision in decision-making.

*"COVID-19 has presented the international ocean community with a new set of challenges. Restricted travel and diverted resources have made our efforts now more important than ever. One trend which is gaining increasing traction is the publication of ocean and fisheries data to increase our collective scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technologies. Open, transparent data can allow policymakers, authorities and researchers to address the challenges that restricted travel and diverted resources offer. Access to information such as oceanographic, biological and human-activity data allows our ocean community to collate information, analyze problems and develop marine technology solutions." (Global Fishing Watch, United Kingdom)*

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Multiple stakeholders highlighted that **digital infrastructure for learning, training and data sharing** needs all countries' cooperation and partnership. As noted in one submission, software technology companies are meaningful partners in providing tools to support the transfer of knowledge. Stakeholders also highlighted the importance

## Ocean Action Example

United by the Sea aims at protecting the ocean by raising awareness. It engages in the promotion of ocean-related events/initiatives and in the dissemination of knowledge through dedicated campaigns involving people all around the world in partnership with many other Institutions. (Highlighted by United by the Sea, Portugal)

of sharing and replicating lessons learned among local communities.

Some participants reminded the connection between scientific evidence and policymaking and smart and innovative solutions. Many inputs recommended to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships, and **partnerships with representatives of coastal communities and the maritime industry**.

*"With institutional collaboration we can support the R&D invested to reach all corners of the globe." (ABB Group, Sweden)*

A call for partnership among **universities of developed and developing countries** to support knowledge exchange was mentioned. Increasing partnerships in marine energy development and exploitation was proposed.

## Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

*"While the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ocean science is still unknown, we welcome the cross-border scientific collaborations that have arisen during these challenging times." (The Dutch Marine Energy Centre, The Netherlands)*

Several contributors underlined the need for more **inclusive processes**, through involving coastal communities, experts and fishers in marine technology implementation and transfer of knowledge.

Many inputs underlined the need to have **high-quality, reliable and publicly available datasets**. Some inputs called for global standardized processes for measuring and managing data to be established and delivered in forums. The integration of data from different scientific disciplines was considered to be essential too.

An urgent need to dedicate **financial resources** featured prominently in the consultation. Many stakeholders agreed on the fact that improving the state of ocean knowledge requires all sectors to continuously invest in research efforts.



**Interactive Dialogue 7**  
**Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**



Source: Paul Einerhand on Unsplash

Under this topic, contributions from 23 stakeholders were received, more detailed inputs are available for viewing [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Among the submissions, the importance of international law, especially **the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement**, was predominantly emphasized. Many stakeholders were concerned about the delays in the BBNJ negotiations due to the pandemic and called for joint efforts to work further on the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.

*"A strong and secure BBNJ treaty offers one of the greatest opportunities to address the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources." (Sharkproject International, Switzerland)*

*"The Negotiating Committee for the BBNJ Agreement provides a useful platform for government officials, experts and stakeholders to address priority issues for the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources." (Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan)*

Stakeholders flagged the importance of involving civil society for effective international law, as well as the need for effective High Seas governance mechanisms and the integration of adaptive management of fisheries and ecosystems in legal frameworks. Stakeholders highlighted that the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP) could provide a platform for discussions on priority issues and international partnerships. Stakeholders also stressed the need to ensure **legal protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples** to the ocean and indigenous co-governance models while implementing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

In addition, many stakeholders expressed concerns about the development of illegal,

unreported, and unregulated fishing (**IUU fishing**) and distant water fishing, as well as deep-sea mining and ill-advised coastal development projects. Stakeholders urged that these challenges should be overcome by specific measurements, such as **implementing human rights laws and the FAO small-scale fishery guidelines**.

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Stakeholders called attention to the limited opportunities for **international and interdisciplinary collaboration** due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To address the implementation of SDG 14, meaningful engagement with community-based organizations, local CSOs/NGOs, and local coastal communities was highlighted.

*"Many countries do not recognize locally managed marine areas in their national records yet there is a lot of effort from the communities in conserving coastal and marine areas." (South West Indian Ocean Tuna Forum, Kenya)*

Greater dialogue between governments, the scientific community, and intergovernmental (UN) bodies and their legal departments were also flagged as critical. In addition, stakeholders flagged the need for coordination between the UN and Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) to develop policies for SDG 14, and to advance compliance of international agreements and their monitoring.

*"The UN Ocean Conference shall encourage an enabling policy environment that promotes innovative solutions, including more engagement with financial sectors and civil society, informed by science and practice to drive ocean restoration for long-term economic development in a climate neutral approach." (Mundus Maris, Belgium)*

According to stakeholders, new partnerships between research institutes, governmental

## Ocean Action Example

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Megamove is working globally to engage with the marine movement ecology community. The Megamove initiative involves hundreds of marine researchers/experts in the field of marine ecology and big data analysis. The initiative specializes in tracking and analyzing data from animals to inform where overlaps are excessive and may result in injury or death of endangered animals. (Highlighted by The University of Western Australia, Australia)

organizations and policymakers were needed to overcome the gap between international law and conservation needs. Numerous stakeholders called for cooperation on the work of various international laws, including redefining the [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\)](#).

*“Applying hydro-diplomacy practices to the ocean context could help build new partnerships, create transnational marine protected areas, better communicate fishing yields, methods, and standards across borders, and expand upon the responsibilities outlined for each state in Article 94 of UNCLOS.” (University College Dublin, Ireland)*

### **Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14**

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of international laws such as the BBNJ agreement and UNCLOS. Furthermore, stakeholders flagged the importance of achieving an ambitious outcome of the negotiations for the Treaty of the High Seas, aiming to create an international governance mechanism for the conservation and sustainable use of all mineral resources, and to improve legal support within international law for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and regions most at risk.

*“Make the UN Ocean Treaty the overarching framework for the sustainable management of*

*all uses of the ocean and set aside at least 30% of ocean as a network of Marine Protected Areas and ensure the rest of the ocean is sustainably managed and restored to health.” (Sea At Risk, Belgium)*

Many stakeholders called for concrete actions concerning fisheries, such as to **stop harmful fishing practices** and to improve controls and monitoring in the fight against IUU fishing. Stakeholders stressed the importance of implementing more specific, research-informed annual fishing yields and a “Fins Naturally Attached” policy in jurisdictions to stop overexploitation of sharks. In addition, stakeholders mentioned that the precautionary principles of the UNCLOS Fish Stock Agreement should be implemented at all Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs).

*“Recent science suggests that static closures in areas beyond national jurisdiction, where most resources are migratory, and ecosystems are dynamic may not be appropriate in many instances to achieve objectives under SDG 14.” (Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, United States)*



**Interactive Dialogue 8**  
**Leveraging Interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

Source: Pyvovarova Yevheniia on Unsplash

Under this topic, contributions from 32 stakeholders were received, more details are available [here](#).

## Main trends, challenges and opportunities

Stakeholders identified interlinkages between SDG 14 and several other Goals, and called for **holistic rather than siloed approaches** towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Stakeholders predominantly stressed the interlinkages between **SDG 14** and **SDG 17** (Partnerships for the goals) and called for strengthened collaboration and partnerships among various stakeholders to establish long-term sustainable solutions and to promote synergies to achieve the SDGs. The COVID-19 pandemic was, thereby, seen as both constraining multi-stakeholder partnerships and as an advantage by providing the possibility of virtual events with broader participation.

The interlinkages between **SDG 14** and **SDG 13** (Climate Action) and **SDG 15** (Life on Land) were also emphasized by many stakeholders. According to stakeholders, these are mutually dependent SDGs and the efforts to fight climate change, to improve ocean health, and to halt biodiversity loss, will also contribute to the achievement of other SDGs. Stakeholders also noted that implementing SDG 14 will be critical to address the challenges and trade-offs between climate actions and biodiversity goals. Other important interlinkages include **SDG 14**

and **SDG 1** (No poverty), **SDG 2** (Zero hunger), and **SDG 5** (Gender equality). Stakeholders agreed that achieving SDG 14 is the base for alleviating hunger, poverty, and improving livelihoods. It was also mentioned that ocean health is the crucial source of blue foods which are vital for people's livelihoods. On **SDG 5**, stakeholders stressed that addressing gender equality while dealing with ocean-related issues is fundamental and could be strengthened through acknowledging and supporting women's contribution to ocean-based industries and other working fields as well as including their voices in multi-stakeholder collaborations.

## Possible areas for new partnerships to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

Stakeholders emphasized the **importance of cross-sectorial partnerships** for the implementation of SDG 14, including strengthening interconnectivity among civil society and relevant action groups such as women's groups, small and medium-sized enterprises, and small-scale fisheries. Stakeholders highlighted the success of various local, national, regional, and international platforms, such as the [ECOSOC Partnership Forum](#), and proposed a dynamic platform to hold and best leverage current partnerships.

*"Empowering civil society can give a strong impetus to the implementation of SDG 14. In particular, the voice of civil society should be fully listened to in the negotiations of BBNJ." (China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation, China)*

### Ocean Action Example

The [Action Platform for Source to Sea Management](#) is a global network of partners whose work goes beyond freshwater or marine issues but also engage with climate change, energy, biodiversity and human rights, among others, thereby addressing the linkages between the SDGs and accelerating the 2030 Agenda. (Highlighted by the Stockholm International Water Institute, Sweden)

## Ocean Action Example

The [Blue/Aquatic Foods Action Coalition](#) brings together UN Member State governments and participants from civil society, the fishing and aquaculture industry, and other sectors and can be built upon to further multiple goals. (Highlighted by the Environmental Defense Fund and the Center for Ocean Solutions at Stanford University, United States)

*"To achieve SDG14 and other SDGs related to SSF, commitment and shared responsibility for different stakeholders are necessary. Working in harmony is essential since the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of co-operation and solidarity to achieve resilience through alternative solutions." (Comunidad y Biodiversidad A.C. (COBI), Mexico)*

Stakeholders further called on international communities to exploit synergies between SDG 14 and other SDGs, and particularly urged the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to include ocean actions and solutions on their agendas. In addition, the scientific community, decision-makers, civil society organizations, and the financial sector should collaborate on integrating the ocean, climate, and biodiversity agendas.

A few potential areas of new partnerships were identified by stakeholders, for example **connecting fishing communities with consumers** to promote local food, and to implement a **human rights-based approach** to development.

### Main recommendations to advance on the implementation of SDG 14

*"SDGs implementation needs to be further mainstreamed in the key policy agenda at the highest level as well as at multiple levels while promoting the approaches to pursue co-benefit and synergy and optimize trade-offs." (Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan)*

Stakeholders recommended taking up **interdisciplinary and intersectoral action** to achieve SDG 14. A strong and active network of organizations and practitioners working towards other goals which intersect with SDG 14 should be encouraged to discuss, develop, and advocate for shared priorities. Furthermore, stakeholders suggested cross-sectorial funders networks to identify leveraging opportunities between organizations supporting different SDGs. Stakeholders also flagged the necessity to invest in a holistic assessment of development priorities at global, regional, national and local levels to minimize negative trade-offs.

*"Non-state actors must build bridges among climate and biodiversity communities to change the way they mobilize and influence decision-makers." (Ocean & Climate Platform, France)*

Stakeholders also called for strengthened interagency collaboration on SDG 14 within the UN System, key mechanisms including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), as well as information sharing and technical collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

*"The Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines provide a road map, not only for SSF but for all ocean uses, in linking those ocean uses to a wide range of social, environmental and economic aspects within coastal communities, and thereby linking together SDG 14 with other SDGs." (Community Conservation Research Network, Canada)*

