



UN Oceans 2022: *"Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions"*

Citizens of the Global Sea

In response to this call for action, the Ocean Decade Heritage Network, which chairs the Ocean Decade Action "[Cultural Heritage Framework Programme](#)", underscores the role of cultural heritage in contributing to the success of SDG 14 and the identified outcomes of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

Throughout the UN Ocean Decade, a direct link is being made between science and measurable changes in the world's conditions. Halting the decline of the marine environment depends on people. Hence understanding how people behave and have behaved with respect to the sea is critically important.

The wealth of knowledge generated from cultural heritage data about past materials and societies' interaction with the sea can and will play a significant role in delivering SDG 14.

Cultural heritage encompasses intangible as well as tangible heritage. Human interaction with the historic environment – embodied in traditional knowledge – is essential to understanding our ocean present and to forecasting change and its implications for human well-being and livelihoods. An inseparable part of the marine and coastal environments, the physical remains of past human interactions with the sea can inform the present. Both intangible and tangible cultural heritage can help us understand how coastal and marine ecosystems achieved their present form and to identify the pressures upon them; it can provide historical datasets to help us gauge future patterns regarding pollution, impacts of climate change, and other hazards.

We call upon the UN to take Ocean Action:

- **Acknowledge** the essential role of culture heritage in delivering sustainable development in our seas and oceans, noting in particular the relevance to the UN Ocean Decade and UNESCO's Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda;
- **Acknowledge** the power of cultural heritage as a medium for engaging the public in addressing the sustainability of our coasts, seas and oceans; including through citizen science to investigate, protect and celebrate long-standing relationships between people and the sea around the globe;
- **Recognise** the importance of cultural heritage stakeholders in enabling ocean scientists, and to form innovative partnerships to work together to deliver SDG 14.

This statement is presented by Dr. Athena Trakadas, Chair, Ocean Decade Heritage Network.

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