



2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event

Scaling up ocean action through inter-agency cooperation and coordination: Case studies, challenges and opportunities

Wednesday, 29 June 2022, 16:00-17:15, Altice Arena (Blue Zone), Side Event Room 1

Organized by UN-Oceans

Background on the event

UN-Oceans (www.unoceans.org) is the inter-agency mechanism bringing together international organizations in the United Nations system whose mandates address ocean issues and the International Seabed Authority. This side event provided an opportunity to take stock of the innovative and successful partnerships developed by members within the framework of UN-Oceans, focusing on case studies where inter-agency cooperation and partnerships have resulted in synergies in ocean-related action for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14. It highlighted how inter-agency cooperation, including through UN-Oceans, can provide a means to scale up ocean action to address the cumulative challenges facing our ocean through engagement across the United Nations system. It emphasized the demonstrable benefits for Member States and other stakeholders of such partnerships, which bring together expertise across sectors for an enhanced overall impact. Bringing together high-level officials of UN-Oceans member organizations, the event also provided the opportunity to engage in a robust and forward-looking discussion regarding how UN-Oceans can more effectively contribute to scaled-up ocean action through enhanced inter-agency cooperation, including with regard to the role of science, and with a focus on practical and implementable solutions.

Key Issues discussed

High-level representatives from nine UN-Oceans Members were present to showcase successful case studies of inter-agency cooperation. These case studies addressed themes including:

- UN-Oceans contribution and support to the implementation of SDG14 through substantive and other support to the 2022 UN Ocean Conference;
- development of ocean biodiversity databases;

- ocean science, with a focus on the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development;
- ocean observation;
- ocean-based or nature-based solutions to tackle the effects of climate change;
- harmful fisheries subsidies;
- the well-being of seafarers; and
- capacity-building
- The presentations highlighted how inter-agency cooperation and coordination is crucial to leveraging resources and expertise in order to address a wide variety of ocean issues of concern to States and other stakeholders
- Attention was also drawn to challenges facing inter-agency cooperation and coordination, including in relation to financial resources

Key recommendations for action

- Strengthening cooperation and partnerships between the members of UN-Oceans, as well as the wider United Nations system, including through the Resident Coordinator system, thereby enabling the best use of the expertise and resources available, including at the local level, and consequent scaled-up and integrated action
- Focusing on the inventory of mandates and activities of UN-Oceans members in order to provide States and other stakeholders with relevant information, and to promote integrated systems of decision-making at the national level
- Broadening outreach activities to promote the involvement of other stakeholders in taking ocean action, including the private sector
- Improving efforts to ensure and mainstream gender diversity across programmes and activities
- Promoting the science-policy interface
- Contributing to ocean-climate discussions

Voluntary Commitments

UN-Oceans Members have made a new Voluntary Commitment this year relating to *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea at 40: Successes and Future Prospects*. This commitment entails the issuance of a publication that reflects on the Convention's successful contribution to the promotion of the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment. It will highlight the importance of the Convention and related instruments for the sustainable use of ocean resources, both living and non-living, and ocean-related actions by States under the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, environmental, and social – and outline how the Convention's provisions, and their effective implementation, have assisted States in realizing their goals, including by facilitating the development of national ocean-related policies. It will also illustrate how the legal framework of the Convention has contributed to the development of other international instruments, including rules, standards and recommended practices and procedures, in ocean-related fields that are under the purview of organizations which are members of UN-Oceans.