

Key recommendations and messages: **Science towards a sustainable ocean by 2030: International accountability, best practices and success stories**

The Ocean Cities Network (OC-NET) Decade programme enhances a new relation of citizens with the seas, where stakeholders will build local-to-global science-based sustainable policies. One example is the Ocean Cities Global Treaty on Plastics Manifesto, promoted during the Marlice forum and based on the UNEA 5.2 resolution for zero-plastics into the sea, to be developed through the European Regional Sea Conventions.

Spain supports ambitious but realistic measures avoiding carbon leakage to other countries. Spain will work on the implementation of the ship's emission control area in the Mediterranean and aims at the protection of cetaceans with a Particular Sensitive Sea Area; and will participate and coordinate working groups at the IMO to prevent plastic pollution. We recommend to assess the efficiency of industrial fishing vessels and to set sustainability indicators in fisheries in key aspects such as pollution prevention and safety of life at sea, consistent with the 2030 SDGs, that are able to be used for the protection of the high seas. The entry into force of the IMO's 2012 Cape Town Agreement is critical to lower fatality rates and to contribute to deter IUUF.

Spanish marine reserves for Small Scale Fishers, built from best science and with two main tools: agreements; and permanent financing for surveillance, follow up and awareness actions. Results are clearly shown underwater at any marine reserve and its surroundings and from stakeholders (allows constrained uses under strict regulation and, always, at least one – or more- integral reserves without any use). In marine reserves the scientific advice is our principal pillar. The Iberian sardine is an example of cooperation between scientists and managers (key in identifying management strategies aimed at rebuilding the stock and designed to assist decision-making) and between countries.

Spain is committed to ensuring that Europe's biodiversity is recovered for the benefit of people, the planet, the climate and our economy. To do this, we must strengthen our legal frameworks, strategies and action plans. In this sense, one of the most recognized tools to achieve effective conservation is the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPA). Spain has recently announced the further extension of the MPA network with the protection of the 25% of its marine waters by 2025, with the ultimate target of increasing the protection until the 30% by 2030.

In the context of sustainability of fisheries, ten management plans and Fisheries Restricted Areas have been established in the Mediterranean, and in the context of the GFCM 2030 Strategy, Spain is promoting regional cooperation in western Mediterranean, including on topics such as minimizing depredation and implementing efficient fisheries monitoring and control measures.

This approach and efforts are to be transferred out borders by supporting the adoption of an ambitious Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the approval of a final agreement of on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions.

Mexico, is committed to protect the ocean and is proud to be part of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy - or Ocean Panel - an initiative that seeks to promote SDG 14 and that has allowed positioning a strategic issue for Mexico and the world: the transition towards a sustainable ocean economy. The Ocean Panel, co-chaired by Norway and Palau, is a unique group of 16 countries committed to develop, catalyze, and support solutions for the health and wealth of the ocean, regarding policy, governance, technology, and finance. This successful multilateral initiative, based on management policies, joint work, and international collaboration, seeks to achieve effective protection and sustainable production of the ocean, in order to achieve an equitable prosperity.

The Ocean Panel launched its Transformations document in December 2020, identifying a new ocean action agenda on five key ocean areas: health, wealth, equity, knowledge, and finance. Also, in December 2020, all member countries committed to achieve a 100% integrated management of their Exclusive Economic Zones, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans. To fulfill this commitment, Mexico is working on various ocean initiatives. The most important milestone in 2021 was an unprecedented multi-sector and inter-institutional collaboration effort in the country: the formulation of the Implementation Strategy for a Sustainable Ocean Economy in Mexico 2021-2024. This document aims to identify Mexico's priorities to move towards a sustainable ocean economy, establishing a new sustainable ocean action agenda for the country.

One of the main priorities for the Ocean Panel, in its Transformations document, and for our country, is ocean knowledge and ocean accounts. There is a need for developing a complete sequence of national ocean accounts that are actively used to inform decision-making. At the national and international level, there is a growing interest in measuring and monitoring the health of the ocean, causing an increase in the generation of ocean data and information. This, in turn, creates opportunities to establish a national ocean accounting system that facilitates the follow-up of various national and international initiatives and commitments. Therefore, Mexico is working on the design of a national ocean knowledge platform that organizes, integrates, articulates and disseminates ocean information in the country, facilitating its access and supporting the construction of a national ocean accounting system.

The conceptual and methodological experience gained through more than 25 five years of work prepare Mexico to undertake the task of developing ocean accounting and other initiatives involving the consolidation and strengthening of ocean-based data, with environmental, social and economic components. INEGI, as national statistical and geospatial office, regularly produces satellite accounts on tourism, unpaid and voluntary labour, and has piloted Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services, currently under implementation.

Gathering the best available data and science, for ocean accounting and nature-based solutions, is a complex process. Integration of data, coordination of information initiatives and institutions (including our Foreign, Finance, Environment

and Navy Ministries), and international cooperation are key elements. Initial steps include an Ocean Knowledge Data Hub, participating in the ProBlue World Bank initiative (led nationally by the Foreign and Finance ministries) as well as our adhesion to the GOAP. Strengthen knowledge, data and capacity in ocean health and finance. This will allow decision-making processes and activities to adapt to new knowledge of potential risks, cumulative impacts and opportunities associated with business activities.

In the other hand, the use of available technology to monitor fisheries performance and to generate reliable data on the production processes and its impacts on natural resources and systemic elements, has proved to be essential to ensure sustainable fisheries management, protected ecosystems and improved socioeconomic outcomes in Mexico. In the context of climate change and its implications for marine ecosystems, commercial species, food security and coastal communities' wellbeing, a centralized platform of oceanic and coastal information is strongly recommended in order to support: i) the development of reliable vulnerability assessments at the local level, ii) the improvement of fisheries management practices to ensure sustainability, adaptation and resilience, iii) the implementation of sound fisheries policies.