



2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event

The future and ocean WE (ALL) want: Inclusion and integration for strong, sustainable and equitable blue economies

28th June 2022 at Trivoli Oriente Hotel, Lisbon, Portugal

Organized by the One Ocean Hub (University of Strathclyde, UK), the Government of Solomon Islands, the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, WWF Accelerating Coastal Community Led Conservation Initiative, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Danish Institute for Human Rights, the Association of Commonwealth Universities, and the Nippon Foundation - University of Edinburgh “Ocean Voices” Programme and Ocean Nexus Center.

Background on the event

The side-event titled ‘The future and ocean WE (ALL) want: Inclusion and integration for strong, sustainable and equitable blue economies’ presented a unique opportunity to explore the values, challenges and processes of adopting transdisciplinary ocean research to ensure respect and inclusivity for the needs, knowledge and human rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. Transdisciplinary research implies working with stakeholders and human rights-holders, ocean experts from varied disciplines, and different knowledge holders in the co-design and co-production of solution-oriented research. The event started with the projection of a short film produced by the One Ocean Hub titled [Ocean and Women](#), which gives voice to Ghanaian women fishers on their challenges in engaging with the blue economy, the importance to improve the protection of the women’s human rights in small-scale fisheries to enhance the accountability of the government and businesses, for example mining and large-scale industrial fishing companies. Although blue economy initiatives are often well intended, the film shows that some initiatives can have negative consequences on coastal communities. The event continued with roundtable discussion on the human rights issues surfacing as [blue economy](#) developments expand at scale. The ensuing discussion aimed to distil relevant lessons learnt in building innovative approaches to inclusivity, human rights protection and non-discrimination in sustainable ocean-based economies.

Key Issues discussed

The side-event discussed the following pressing questions surrounding the implementation of blue economies policies and legislative decisions:

- What actions are being taken to support economic growth and respond to societal needs, whilst ensuring appropriate stewardship of the ocean for future generations?
- Who stands to benefit or be disadvantaged from blue economy initiatives?
- What needs to be done to improve the protection of the women's human rights in small-scale fisheries and to enhance the accountability of the government and businesses?
- What are the values, challenges and processes of adopting transdisciplinary ocean research to ensure respect and inclusivity for the needs, knowledge and human rights of indigenous peoples and local communities?

Key recommendations for action

Fair partnerships to co-develop sustainable ocean-based economies, need to:

- integrate a human rights-based approach; arts-based participatory research, and the integration of ocean science (including a standard framework on deep-sea ecosystem services) with historical analysis and environmental justice research.
- engage diverse indigenous experiences and their cultural values.
- scale up models that support a real transformation towards protecting and restoring ocean health that are inclusive of and enabling for coastal communities.
- improve capacity building for researchers, students, and communities to contribute to policy dialogue.
- centre equity in capacity building conversations.
- enhance research and collaboration to better assess, document and most importantly, address the human rights impacts in fisheries and aquaculture.
- empower women to rely on their rights, including human rights, and to put pressure in duty bearers to fulfil their responsibility towards women's rights in the small-scale fisheries sector.

Voluntary Commitments

This event highlighted commitments to conduct transdisciplinary research that implies working with stakeholders and human rights-holders, ocean experts from varied disciplines, and different knowledge holders in the co-design and co-production of solution-oriented research. By doing collaborative and transdisciplinary research, we can develop research capacity needed to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the well-being of people in Small-Island Developing States (SIDS) and Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC).