

Questionnaire

Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the MSI, BPOA for the Sustainable Development of SIDS

PART A

1. Enhanced Support for achieving Resilient Prosperity in SIDS The theme for the SIDS4 Conference is “Charting a Course toward Resilient Prosperity” as such resilience building will be at the core of the new Programme of Action for SIDS. Briefly elaborate on any resilience building interventions or strategies (proactive or preventative) that will be implemented at national or regional levels aimed specifically at improving resilience in SIDS. Please include indications of resource allocations, if available (750 words).

The DOALOS/Norad Programmes of Assistance provides capacity development and technical assistance for developing States, including SIDS, to reinforce their capacity to implement the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and related agreements and to better harness the benefits of the blue economy including through more effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its activities include national ocean governance studies (OGS), targeted technical assistance, regional capacity-building workshops, and regional consultations on capacity gaps. These activities enable beneficiary countries to, inter alia, make informed decisions regarding resilience strategies. Under this project, OGS were prepared for Antigua and Barbuda, Kiribati, Trinidad and Tobago and regional workshops benefitted members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States, Pacific island States, and members of the Indian Ocean and wider Caribbean regions.

The Project of Assistance to Strengthen Participation in and Implementation of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA), funded by the European Union, and implemented by the Division in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), aims to promote awareness of UNFSA and build the capacity of developing States to fully and effectively implement its provisions. The Project provides awareness raising materials and outreach activities which may benefit SIDS to understand the benefits of participation in UNFSA, including two ongoing technical cooperation activities supporting Maldives and Tonga to strengthen their capacity to implement UNFSA through needs-based demand-driven assistance.

In line with General Assembly resolution 77/321, the Division has developed a programme of activities to promote a better understanding of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) and prepare for its entry into force. The planned activities include, among others, regional workshops, technical assistance at the national level. These activities are expected to benefit SIDS and highlight the role of the Agreement in building resilient prosperity (more detail below).

Through the Ocean Governance Capacity-Building Training Programme, funded through the PROBLUE Trust Fund managed by the World Bank, the Division works with partners to deliver online regional workshops on ocean governance, aimed at strengthening implementation at the national level and building resilience in the face of growing challenges to marine ecosystems. The most recent delivery of the workshop was for the Latin American and the Caribbean region and featured many participants from Caribbean SIDS. The Division worked with partners to translate relevant e-learning modules into Spanish and participated in live online sessions, in both English and Spanish.

DOALOS manages a number of trust funds that provide assistance to developing States, and in some cases SIDS in particular, in the implementation of UNCLOS and its implementing agreements. Through these trust funds, as many as a dozen SIDS are provided assistance each year.

Within the Project “Human Resources Development and Advancement of the Legal Order of the World’s Oceans” implemented in partnership with The Nippon Foundation, as well as with the support of 40 academic partners, the Division implements various capacity-building activities, particularly through Fellowship Programmes, which are primarily aimed at government officials and professionals from developing States. With the overall objective of building capacity in ocean affairs and the law of the sea, the Programmes promote the better understanding of UNCLOS and related instruments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Over the past 20 years, this collaborative effort has successfully established a network of over 250 Alumni from more than 90 States, including SIDS across all regions. Many Alumni play key roles in their administrations’ ocean-related efforts.

At present the Division implements the [United Nations-Nippon Foundation Fellowship](#), the [Strategic Needs Fellowship](#) and the new [Ocean Governance Fellowship for SIDS](#), as well as the [Alumni Programme](#). The first session of the [Ocean Governance Fellowship for SIDS](#) will begin in September 2024 and has been specifically established to enhance the capacity of SIDS government officials to effectively implement ocean governance and international legal frameworks, particularly UNCLOS and related instruments, including the BBNJ Agreement. The Fellowship also aims to support the development of ocean governance frameworks necessary to implement the SDGs, especially SDG 14, with a focus on developing sustainable blue economies, addressing environmental impacts, and building resilience to climate change, ultimately aiming to tackle the triple planetary crisis.

2. Enhanced and Tailored Development Cooperation for SIDS: The New SIDS Programme of Action will require improved, tailored development cooperation approaches, calibrated to the specific needs, capacity constraints, and economic challenges facing SIDS. Briefly elaborate on any planned or ongoing strategies/approaches to improve and deliver on more tailored development support to SIDS. What are the expected results from these interventions in the targeted countries. Please include indications of resource allocations if available (750 words).

All the activities within the DOALOS/Norad Programmes of Assistance are designed to provide targeted support for strengthening ocean governance frameworks in developing States, including SIDS. The Programmes employ a needs-based approach, utilizing various activities to identify and address specific challenges faced by beneficiary countries. The ocean governance studies (OGS) assess the legal and institutional frameworks of the beneficiary State, pinpointing capacity constraints, economic challenges, and opportunities for developing blue economic sectors. Building upon the needs identified through OGS and regional consultations, regional workshops provide targeted capacity building for stakeholders. For a select group of OGS beneficiary States, tailored technical assistance programs are offered to address specific policy and legal constraints identified within their respective OGS reports.

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The curriculum for the United Nations – Nippon Foundation Ocean Governance Fellowship for SIDS is being developed with full consideration of the special circumstances of SIDS and the diverse challenges, opportunities and needs across different regions. Fellows will participate in tailored needs-based training activities developed on the basis of ocean governance challenges at the national level identified by participants in the application materials. To ensure a needs-based curriculum, the Division is also currently engaging in valuable discussions with SIDS experts, including Alumni, SIDS constituencies, and academic partners. The Ocean Governance Fellowship for SIDS directly aligns with the objective of building capacity for the better understanding of “the rights, obligations and responsibilities under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), including to enable effective participation in activities under UNCLOS”, as outlined in the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS regarding the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources.

PART B

Paragraph 13 of Resolution 78/232 Requests the Secretary-General to assess how multidimensional vulnerability is currently considered by the United Nations system. Please indicate how your entity considers multidimensional vulnerability in your policies, practices and Programmes (1000 words).

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea prepares the annual Reports of the Secretary General on Oceans and Law of the Sea, which synthesize inputs by United Nations system organizations, programmes and bodies with relevant mandates in ocean affairs. The inclusion of inputs from across this system allows for the consideration of multidimensional vulnerabilities faced by SIDS by all relevant organizations in the context of ocean affairs. In addition, the United Nations Legal Counsel and the Division, as focal point for UN-Oceans, the inter-agency cooperation mechanism that seeks to enhance, strengthen and promote coordination, coherence and effectiveness of the activities of the United Nations system and the International Seabed Authority (ISA) on ocean and coastal issues, supports coordination and cooperation in ocean-related matters within the United Nations system, including in relation to those addressed by resolution 78/232.

The DOALOS/Norad Programmes of Assistance employ a needs-based approach to strengthen ocean governance frameworks in developing countries, including, including SIDS. This approach prioritizes the identification of specific national and regional capacity gaps and needs related to ocean governance. Tailored activities are then implemented to address these identified challenges. This targeted approach ensures that the program effectively addresses some of the multidimensional vulnerabilities faced by these States. In recognition of the special vulnerabilities and financial constraints faced by developing States, including SIDS, the Programmes' activities, particularly the ocean governance studies and workshops, incorporate a focus on blue economy and blue finance. By equipping beneficiary States with the knowledge and tools needed to harness the potential of their ocean economies sustainably, the program fosters economic development and resilience within these States.