

Ocean Action Panel 6:

Advancing sustainable ocean-based economies, sustainable maritime transport, and coastal community resilience leaving no one behind

*An extract of the Global Online Stakeholder Consultation:
Inputs to Ocean Action Panels Concept Papers*

About this Paper

This paper is an extract from the report of the Global Online Stakeholder Consultation: Inputs to Ocean Action Panels Concept Papers, which summarizes inputs received from stakeholders to a global online stakeholder consultation organized by UN DESA in connection with the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference which will be held from 9 June to 13 June in Nice, France.

The main Report can be found [here](#), including links to all responses and all inputs to the ten Ocean Action Panels, as well as detailed background information and a summary.

This paper presents summaries of key messages for Ocean Action Panel 6: Advancing sustainable ocean-based economies, sustainable maritime transport, and coastal community resilience leaving no one behind.



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Under this topic, 148 contributions were received, and more detailed inputs are available [here](#).

Main Challenges

Stakeholders across various sectors identified significant challenges to sustainable ocean management. A critical issue highlighted was the environmental impact of the shipping industry. **Noise pollution, disruptions to migratory patterns, and accidental harm to megafauna** were mentioned as major concerns. Additionally, stakeholders emphasized that pollution from **poorly managed ports and unregulated ship-breaking practices** exacerbates ocean degradation.

Stakeholders noted that many **coastal communities are ill-prepared for the consequences of sea-level rise**, and that **ecosystem collapse has begun to affect the livelihoods of small-scale fisheries** in different parts of the world, further threatening their economic and social well-being. They recommended increasing resilience through **enhancing infrastructure and adaptive spatial planning**, utilizing nature-based solutions, and developing emergency response plans.

"We cannot pursue climate mitigation in a vacuum - it must be pursued in kind with climate adaptation and resilience efforts, to ensure that these critical coastal communities will be able to survive and thrive in a climate-positive future." (High Ambition Climate Collective)

Transformative Actions

Stakeholders mentioned various potential transformative actions, such as the creation of **eco-labels and global standards** to promote sustainable shipping practices. These labels would help consumers, businesses, and actors in the eco-tourism industry identify companies that prioritize sustainable environmental practices, including pollution reduction, lower carbon emissions, and ecosystem preservation. Developing recognized standards would **hold the industry accountable, ensuring transparency and widespread adoption**. Stakeholders emphasized that collaboration between governments, international bodies, and the private sector is essential for successful implementation.

"The label fosters a sense of corporate responsibility, encouraging businesses to engage in local conservation efforts, support marine protection initiatives, and collaborate with local communities. This not only strengthens their brand but also contributes to the overall health of the coastal and marine environment." (Engaged For Ocean)

Stakeholders emphasized the need to explore **alternative fuel options for shipping** to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. As shipping is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, developing **alternatives like hydrogen, biofuels, and wind-assisted propulsion** were identified as essential for aligning with global climate goals.

Increased research and investment in cleaner technologies were deemed crucial by participants for long-term sustainability.

"This transition to zero-emission technologies and fuels is tantamount to a renaissance of the shipping industry - an opportunity to reimagine and redefine ocean shipping and its relationship not only to the climate and our health, but to our oceans and to marine biodiversity." (Natural Resources Defense Council - NRDC)

Participants also proposed **reducing the number of large-scale industrial vessels or lowering their speed** as a means to decrease environmental harm. This would lower fuel consumption and emissions, minimize the risk of collisions with marine wildlife, and reduce underwater noise pollution affecting migratory species. Additionally, this would **level the playing field for small-scale fisheries**, which have faced challenges in competing internationally. Stakeholders mentioned that implementing such measures would be **a cost-effective option** and called for **industry-wide regulations and incentives**.

"Reducing ship speed is the most immediate and cost-effective measure to mitigate the environmental impact of shipping. It requires no technological modifications and has negligible impact on the overall costs of the shipping industry." (OceanCare)

Enhancing capacity building for coastal communities, particularly those vulnerable to climate change, was identified as a priority by stakeholders. Providing training, financial support, and resources would help these communities manage local ecosystems effectively. Capacity-building efforts should focus on **sustainable fishing practices and ecosystem restoration** while empowering communities in marine resource management. Involvement and education of youth, women, and indigenous communities were also highlighted by stakeholders as vital for sustainable marine management. Stakeholders recognized these groups' cultural ties and traditional knowledge as key to effective conservation. Engaging them through education and **participation in decision-making** would enhance the cultural appropriateness and effectiveness of conservation efforts.

"Making space for small-scale fisheries and coastal communities to express their interest in being part of the sustainable ocean-based economies, and developing programs that center on their strengths and contribution." (TBTI Global Foundation)



Partnership Spotlight

The [Global Maritime Forum](#) (GMF) is driving efforts to decarbonize shipping through the development of Green Shipping Corridors. These corridors are trade routes where zero-emission technologies are implemented and supported by targeted regulatory actions, financial incentives, and collaboration among key stakeholders, including governments, ports, and companies. Notable examples include the Singapore-Rotterdam and Australia-East Asia Iron Ore Green Corridors, where GMF's Getting to Zero Coalition is facilitating the deployment of zero-emission vessels. These industry-led partnerships have shown progress in advancing sustainable maritime transport, providing evidence of effective new approaches to achieve SDG 14. (Submitted by The Global Maritime Forum, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

