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Ocean Action Panel 7:

Leveraging ocean, climate, and biodiversity interlinkages

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 7: Leveraging ocean, climate, and biodiversity interlinkages.

United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UN OCEAN CONFERENCE NICE 2025 FRANCE

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Under this topic, 164 contributions were received, and more detailed inputs are available here.

Main Challenges

Stakeholders identified several key challenges in effectively leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages. A major issue highlighted was the **lack of integrated policies** that simultaneously address these interconnected domains. Stakeholders argue that the current isolated approaches have resulted in ineffective conservation efforts and slowed climate action, particularly due to **insufficient coordination across sectors and regions.**

"Ocean health, climate stability, and biodiversity are deeply interconnected, and addressing these issues in isolation can limit the effectiveness of conservation and climate action efforts." (Major Group of Children and Youth)

Stakeholders frequently mentioned the **lack of collaboration and diversity between various ocean sectors.** They argue that not all communities are involved in the regulation and conservation of ocean biodiversity and climate, especially those most vulnerable to biodiversity loss, increased extreme weather events and rising sea levels. Those with the most knowledge and familiarity with coastal areas lack the funding or resources to effectively protect and conserve.

Another recurring theme was the **difficulty of securing sufficient financial resources** to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems effectively. Many coastal habitats, such as mangroves and seagrass beds, provide essential services that benefit both people and nature. However, investments in these ecosystems often remain insufficient.

"Nature-based solutions deliver for people, nature and the climate. We need to therefore secure unprecedented investment into the conservation and effective management of marine and coastal ecosystems to tackle the linked threats of biodiversity loss and climate change." (WWF International)

A significant challenge raised by stakeholders is the **impact of offshore oil development on ocean ecosystems, climate regulation, and biodiversity**. The expansion of offshore oil and gas projects contributes to marine pollution and disrupts critical marine habitats, threatening species and biodiversity. Stakeholders warned that without stronger regulations and a shift away from offshore oil exploitation, the damage to marine ecosystems could be irreversible.

"The ocean crisis is inherently a climate crisis. From exploration and extraction to processing, refining, and burning fossil fuels, each phase contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions exacerbate climate change, manifesting as rising ocean temperatures, decreased productivity and resilience of marine ecosystems, and disrupted relationships between fisheries and species distribution." (Center for International Environmental Law)

Transformative Actions

Stakeholders highlighted several transformative actions that must be undertaken to effectively leverage the interlinkages between ocean, climate, and biodiversity. Stakeholders strongly advocated for **integrated, interdisciplinary approaches** that break down silos between ocean, climate, and biodiversity policies. One transformative action is the **creation of comprehensive action plans** that simultaneously address all three areas, ensuring that solutions are mutually reinforcing and sustainable in the long term.

"One transformative action that needs to happen is the Creation of Integrated Ocean-Climate-Biodiversity Action Plans. Integrated action plans ensure that efforts to mitigate climate change, protect marine ecosystems, and conserve biodiversity are mutually reinforcing, leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes." (Millennium Child Support Group)

Stakeholders urged the **adoption of inclusive policies** that ensure the meaningful participation of women, indigenous peoples, and local communities in decision-making processes. They argued that without diverse voices and perspectives, efforts to address these interlinkages would remain incomplete and inequitable.

"Develop and enforce policies that ensure women are included in decision-making processes related to ocean, climate, and biodiversity initiatives." (UN Etxea - Basque Country Association for UNESCO)

Many stakeholders stressed the need for **enhanced funding mechanisms** that support cross-sectoral initiatives. These mechanisms would provide financial backing for projects that promote ecosystem resilience while addressing the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss. **Investing in nature-based solutions and blue-carbon projects** was highlighted by stakeholders

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"In order to accelerate progress towards planetary health, the private and public sectors must take advantage of the opportunity presented by the 2025 UN Ocean Conference to develop a framework for investment that adequately responds to the needs of all those components which comprise planetary health, simultaneously." (Ocean Born Foundation)

Partnership Spotlight

The Blue Carbon Initiative focuses on the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves, seagrasses, and salt marshes, to capture carbon and protect biodiversity. Coordinated by Conservation International, IUCN, and UNEP, the initiative involves governments, local communities, scientists, and NGOs. It has demonstrated significant success in carbon sequestration and enhanced ecosystem resilience, contributing to both climate action and biodiversity conservation. (Submitted by GARP Hosting and Human Rights and Forest Brain Africa)

Another transformative action urged by stakeholders is the **eradication of offshore oil**. Stakeholders stressed that **fossil fuel extraction exacerbates both ocean degradation and climate change**. Halting these activities would significantly **reduce greenhouse gas emissions** and **protect marine ecosystems** from harmful practices such as oil spills and ocean acidification.

"The most transformative action needed is to halt offshore oil and gas activities entirely. As the climate emergency intensifies, protecting our oceans is more crucial than ever. This collective effort is vital for restoring ocean resilience, preserving biodiversity, and addressing the climate crisis effectively." (Quantum Leap)

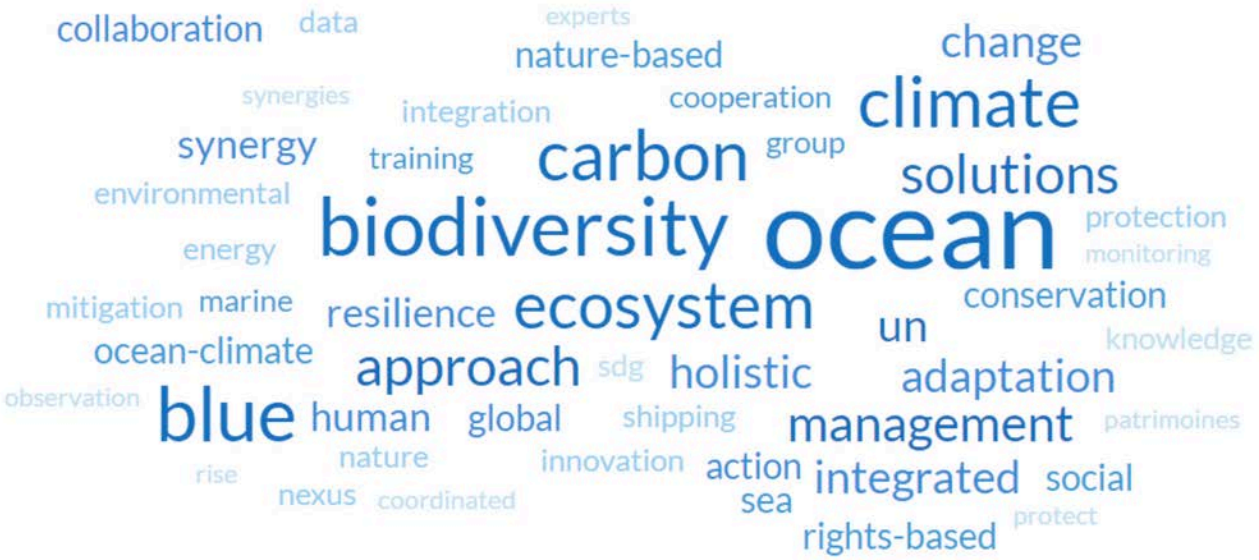

Figure 13: Keywords associated with Ocean Action Panel 7: "Leveraging ocean, climate, and biodiversity interlinkages" according to stakeholders.
Source: UN DESA

Partnership Spotlight

The Reef Resilience Network aims to improve coral reef health globally through restoration and resilience projects. These efforts protect marine biodiversity and strengthen coastal resilience against climate change. The network collaborates with local governments, NGOs, and scientific institutions to support reef conservation projects worldwide. (Submitted by The Nature Conservancy)