

**INPUTS TO THE CONCEPT PAPERS FOR THE OCEAN ACTION PANELS AT THE THIRD UNITED
NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE (9-13 JUNE 2025)**

ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION

Panel c) Promoting and supporting all forms of cooperation, especially at the regional and subregional level

Proposed Topic: The role of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) in ocean governance, particularly in contributing to the achievement of global ocean targets and processes.

It is out of doubt that, given the transboundary nature of the major environmental challenges and the need to tackle them in a coordinated manner, a key role is played by the regional dimension. The relevant Regional Conventions and Organizations as the Regional Seas Programs (RSP) and the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) are indeed crucial in the implementation of policies and measures able to respond to the said emerging challenges and for the achievement of the goals and targets set at global level.

Most of the RSCAPs deliver their obligations through Action Plans and/ or Strategies, which are adopted by Contracting Parties to establish a comprehensive framework for protecting the marine environment and promote the sustainable development of their region. Such Action Plans, which do reflect the region's particular environmental challenges as well as its socio-economic and political situation, are usually underpinned by a legally binding Regional Convention expressing the commitment and political will of signatory governments to tackle their common environmental issues through joint coordinated activities.

Brief, given the above peculiar scenario plus the fact they represent real ecosystem-based hubs encompassing the majority of large marine ecosystems, with mandate on sections of ABNJ, Regional Seas Programs are the most effective tool to facilitate the implementation at national level of the goals and targets set at global level.

The key role of RSCAPs was recognized, *inter alia*, in the Resolution on “Strengthening ocean efforts to tackle climate change, marine biodiversity loss and pollution” adopted by UNEA6 that called for continued cooperation and coordination on marine issues among all relevant global and regional forums and organizations in order to deliver coherently on Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other relevant ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and their targets.

Moreover, in Venaria Reale, last April 2024, under the Italian G7 Presidency, G7 Ministers of Environment, Climate and Energy, while sharing the need to drive the political attention to the role of the regional dimension as an effective contribution to global ocean governance, committed to further boost the role of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) in Ocean governance, being fully aware of the need to improve cooperation and coordination between global and regional fora.

Building on what agreed in Venaria, the Group of seven, during the workshop organized by the Italian G7 Presidency last October 2024 and involving RSCAPs, agreed on a Declaration recognizing and strengthening the role of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, in particular through the promotion of the participation of such bodies in all relevant global processes and fora on ocean and seas and their key role in the related preparatory processes as well as in the implementation of the relative outputs. G7 also agreed to showcase such Declaration and its message at UNOC-3, as the best platform to ensure high visibility to such process as well as its solid follow-up.

In coherence with what mentioned above, Italy is proposing to add a specific topic on the role of RSCAPs in ocean governance where also displaying the result of G7 work on this matter, in particular the Declaration that will be endorsed in the next weeks.