

Norway's input for the UNOC3 «Ocean Action Panels»

a. Fostering sustainable fisheries management including supporting small scale fishers

- The text should highlight how evidence-based management facilitates maintaining long term sustainable and climate adaptive fisheries, lack of proper fisheries management results in overfishing and over-utilisation of living marine resources and lack of implementation of international agreements hamper effective management within states and in regions.
- Small-scale fisheries are critical for local, and global, food security and nutrition, and comprise 90% of fishers globally. Despite this, they are often the poorest and most marginalized in society. Supporting implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries is therefore important in the context of food security and poverty eradication.
- The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) is increasingly recognized as essential for sustainable marine resource management because it considers the interconnectedness of marine ecosystems, biodiversity, and human activities including social benefits of fisheries. However, very few countries have implemented this approach. UNOC3 can be a catalyst for change by engaging stakeholders, showcasing global examples of EAF-implementation, emphasizing data sharing and partnerships and engaging policymakers. EAFM can help reverse the trend of overfishing and promote biodiversity conservation, key aspects of SDG 14.
- Further, UNOC3 can address how EAFM can help ensure long-term food security for coastal and island communities that rely on healthy fish stocks for their livelihoods by showcasing how EAFM is integral to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).
- Improving fisheries management in line with the ecosystem approach to fisheries (i.e. The EAF-Nansen Programme), strengthening the capacities of fisheries institutions and generating scientific knowledge on marine resources and ecosystems is key.

Speakers:

- Per Sandberg, Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries
- Manuel Barange, Assistant Director-General FAO
- Ray Hilborn, University of Washington
- Matthias Geir Palsson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

b. Conserving, sustainably managing and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems including deep-sea ecosystems

The text should highlight the importance of policies being evidence-based to be effective. The text should also describe the importance of research for developing sound and efficient methods for restoration. The text should stress the importance of documenting the effects of past, current and future management, and restoration measures.

Speakers:

- Ida B. Øverjordet, SINTEF

Panel b. should also include the need to protect ice-dependent species and ecosystems. Our polar ocean areas are home to many highly cold-adapted mammals, birds, fish, invertebrates, plants and fungi and microbe species. This extensive biodiversity provides essential services and values to people and planet. These are now under threat from different pressures such as increased human activity and climate change.

Speakers:

- Dr Kit Kovacs (Norwegian Polar Institute)
- Kevin Hedges (DFO, Canada)

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

- Encourage cooperation for the protection and conservation of the marine and coastal environment, especially through regional seas conventions.
- Strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation on knowledge-building and policy on the ocean-climate nexus.
- Urge states to ratify the 1996 Protocol to the 1972 Convention on the prevention of marine pollution by dumping of wastes and other matter and (London Protocol) and the 2009 and 2013 amendments to this Protocol.
- Exploring the BBNJ and its article 8 on “International cooperation”, and how existing instruments, frameworks and bodies should contribute to the objective of the Agreement, within their respective mandates.

The text should also highlight the role and developing potential of *existing* organizations of the following type:

- *Regional fisheries management organizations* such as Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission
- *Regional organizations to protect the marine environment* such as the OSPAR-commission and HELCOM.
- *Sea basin initiatives* such as the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance
- *Continental and sub-continental organizations* such as the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Arctic Council, and the European Union
- *Research co-operation bodies*, such as ICES and PICES.

Speakers:

- Darius Campell, Secretary NEAFC
- Unni Kløvstad, Nordic Council of Ministers
- John Bell, European Commission, Director Healthy Planet, DG RTD

Panel c. should also address the need for broader cooperation within and between LMEs. It is necessary to do so because bilateral and multinational LMEs with a variety of knowledge systems, need to have a common understanding of the ecosystem and to jointly and sustainably explore the resources there. Because many marine commercial and exploited species undertake long seasonally

migrations moving from LME to LME, multinational cooperation based on research and common understanding are vital for a sustainable use of the marine ecosystems.

Speakers:

- Lis Jørgensen (IMR, Norway)
- Fredrik Theisen (Ministry of Climate and Environment, Norway)
- Jason Link (NOAA, US)
- Kirstin Holsman (NOAA, US)

d. Preventing and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities

The text should emphasize reducing run off from major land-based sources, such as agriculture, municipal waste, and major infrastructures such as roads and ports. Both nutrients, toxins and micro plastic should be addressed.

- Incentivise the development, production and use of viable and sustainable alternatives to plastics to enable the phase out of problematic and unnecessary plastics, where warranted and where such alternatives exist.
- Use financial incentives, trade opportunities and extended producer responsibility to encourage sustainable product design and promote standards to maximise reduction, reuse and recycling in pursuit of a circular economy, as well as research on new biodegradable materials that substitute plastics.
- Enforce rules on waste shipments and illegal exports of plastic waste
- Promote a comprehensive life-cycle approach that includes improved waste management and innovative solutions towards reducing the discharge of marine plastic litter to zero.
- Eliminate discharges of plastic litter and microplastics from sea-based sources including ships, offshore installations and from land-based sources including ports and bridges, through stronger regulations, technology development, training programmes and capacity building
- Eliminate ghost fishing gear through such means as reuse and retrieval, promoting gear marking and loss reporting, and supporting development of new environmentally friendly cost-effective gear.

Focus on plastic pollution to the oceans, and the key challenge of increasing financing and blended financing to curb plastic pollution (along the whole plastic value chain). This is especially relevant in the context of the INC negotiations, which will hopefully result in a global binding treaty to end plastic pollution. The need for increased financing is especially dire in low- and middle-income countries, which in many places lacks waste management infrastructure and financially sustainable waste management operations. We suggest therefore focusing on how to increase blended financing and public-private partnerships.

Speakers:

- Sindre Langaas, NIVA
- Hans Fredrik V. Braathen, NIVA

e. Leveraging ocean, climate, and biodiversity interlinkages

- Stimulate early uptake of zero-emission fuels for shipping.
- Climate action is vital for ocean health and a sustainable ocean economy. Reversely, ocean-based action can play a critical role in avoiding the worst impacts of climate change. According to the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, ocean-based action can contribute to closing the emissions gap by as much as 35%, based on solutions that are ready to implement.
- Among these solutions are increased investments in ocean-based renewable energy, in particular offshore wind; green maritime transportation, e.g. by increased use of alternative shipping fuels such as electricity and hydrogen or its derivatives and related infrastructure; as well as marine carbon dioxide removal and carbon capture and storage under the seabed.
- Actions in these fields are already underway, but the potential for increased efforts which will simultaneously benefit the oceans and the global climate is enormous, and can greatly contribute to the transition away from fossil fuels, as agreed at COP 28 in Dubai.

The text should include a paragraph on how sea, ice and air interact. The text should emphasize observations, modelling, and prediction. The discussions should end in recommendations on decision-making tools, both spatial and temporal, for policy makers and ocean management.

Speakers:

- Sveinung Oftedal, Specialist Director, MINISTRY OF CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT, NORWAY, currently Chairman of the IMO Working Group on Greenhouse Gas emissions, and Coordinator of the IMO/PPR
- Geir Ottersen, Norwegian Institute of Marine Research
- Correspondence group on biofouling.
- Tore Furevik, Nansen environmental and remote sensing center.

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

- Minimise the transfer of aquatic invasive species by ships through an effective IMO framework, including its robust implementation.
- Establish early national targets and strategies to support decarbonisation of vessels.
- Apply the global regime for safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships.
- Highlighting the importance of a swift entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and recognizing the need for building capacity in this regard.

The text should detail the needed building blocks and point to areas where innovation is needed. Co-existence dilemmas, ocean and coastal management planning and measures to make the blue economy emission free, should be highlighted.

The green transition of our ocean industries and maritime transport, is necessary in order to reduce climate gas emissions, local pollution and the spreading of invasive species, and will come hand-in-hand with a digital revolution enhancing efficiency, safety and security of human economic activities at and in the seas.

The text should highlight the importance of a just transition of ocean-based economies. A just transition ensures that ocean-based economies are promoted in a way that is fair and inclusive, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind. The text should reflect that a just transition requires cooperation between employee- and employer organisation, with a particular emphasis on the important role of employees in both maritime and marine industries in achieving SDG 14. Specific topics that should be considered is the importance of gender equality and diversity in ocean industries.

The text should also highlight the advancement of sustainable ocean management, which serves as cornerstone for a sustainable ocean economy. As ocean-based activities expand, it is vital to address the opportunities and challenges that arise, particularly those related to coexistence and co-use of ocean spaces.

Sustainable ocean-based economies cannot be achieved when so many of the people who depend on the ocean remain in poverty, and inequality is systemic. The development of new and existing ocean-based sectors and industries must consider human rights and be inclusive. From the local to the global level.

Speakers:

- Sveinung Oftedal, Specialist Director, MINISTRY OF CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT, NORWAY, currently Chairman of the IMO Working Group on Greenhouse Gas emissions, and Coordinator of the IMO/PPR
- Liv Holmefjord, Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries
- Katrine Angell-Hansen, Norwegian Research Council
- Per Schive, (former Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment)

g. Promoting the role of sustainable food from the ocean for poverty eradication and food security

The text should highlight the importance of sustainable food from the ocean in feeding a growing population. The text should also highlight the link between SDG 14 Life below water and SDG 2 on food security and sustainable food production.

Speakers:

- Manuel Barange, FAO
- Representative of NOFIMA

h. Increasing ocean-related scientific cooperation, knowledge, capacity building, marine technology, and education to strengthen the science-policy interface for ocean health

The text should highlight existing the role of regional and global organization in providing the interface between science and policy. The text should sum up the status of the Ocean Decade and implications for the road beyond.

Speakers:

- Steven Thur, NOAA
- Alan Haynie, Secretary General, ICES
- Peter Haugan, Norwegian Institute of Marine Research.
- Christina Abildgaard, Research Council of Norway

Panel h. should also acknowledge the role of young oceanographers and their contribution to marine research - and to the awareness of climate change and sustainable development. It also should address the need for engaging future generations in marine sciences.

Speakers:

- Jens Toft (Arctic Council Secretariat)
- Olivia Lassaline (DFO, Canada)

i. Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the UNCLOS

The text should highlight the importance of UNCLOS.

- Sustainable management of 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans
- When protecting the ocean, for instance through the creation of marine protected areas, it is critical that local communities and people that depend on these resources have their rights upheld. Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) must be applied where indigenous peoples are involved, and coastal communities must be part of the process to ensure that they are not excluded from areas that are of critical importance to them without proper compensation. When protecting marine environment, use and recognition of ancestral knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local communities should be promoted, in line with the new agreement from COP16 on article 8(j).

Speakers:

- Matthias Geir Palsson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

j. Mobilizing finance for ocean actions in the support of SDG14

The text should promote an awareness of the link between investing in ocean research and the revenues that sustainable management can generate from the sea.

The text should discuss the role of public and private financing of required ocean research.

Blue carbon schemes, despite their potential to mitigate climate change and protect coastal ecosystems, carry several risks. It is important to emphasize participatory approaches in blue carbon schemes to ensure the effective and inclusive management of blue carbon ecosystems. Also, the development of innovative financing tools such as blue bonds and coral bonds to support ocean conservation and climate adaptation efforts are important. These financial mechanisms can help countries mobilize resources to achieve their sustainable blue economy goals.

Increasing entrepreneurship and SMEs efforts on blue economy: Blue economy sectors (such as fisheries and aquaculture, maritime transport, and tourism) are strategic and burgeoning areas of focus for many African countries. In order harness the potential of these marine resources and areas, there is a strong need for innovation and entrepreneurial solutions, as well as financing of innovations. However, there is a dire need for a pipeline of investable projects, and many of the sectors are underdeveloped. Early findings from our support to first-loss institutions in Africa show that when guarantees and financing is provided, more established sectors, such as renewable energy and agriculture gain access, while blue economy sectors are still lagging behind.