

UK input to ten Ocean Action Panels and suggested expert panellists for submission to UNDESA

Ocean Action Panel themes

a. Fostering sustainable fisheries management including supporting small-scale fishers.

Preliminary input on what the concept note could cover:

- The role of appropriate data collection in informing stock assessments to support sustainable management
- Application of the precautionary & ecosystems approach, including consideration of impacts on biodiversity
- The role of co-design with stakeholders, including women and those who are more marginalised, in informing effective management measures

Suggested expert (please note further biographical details are below):

- Dr Carl O'Brien (CBE), Defra Chief Fisheries Science Adviser, President of the ICES Council

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

Preliminary input on what the concept note could cover:

- How to we effectively bring best-available science into policy and decision-making for the deep-sea environment to ensure highest environmental standards are upheld.
- Importance of locally led, inclusive, development programming for the protection of critical ecosystems and to support sustainable livelihoods for communities who rely on them.

Suggested experts:

- Dr Gemma Harper (OBE), Chief Executive of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
- Professor Howell, Professor of Deep-Sea Ecology at Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the University of Plymouth.
- Prof. Daniel Jones, Head of the Ocean BioGeosciences Group at the National Oceanography Centre

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

Suggested experts:

- Professor Gideon Henderson, Chief Scientific Advisor, Defra

- Professor Michelle Devlin, Principal scientist at Cefas and honorary professor at University of East Anglia

e. Leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages.

Preliminary input on what the concept note could cover:

- This panel should reflect on the latest discussions and COP16 and UNFCCC29.
- This panel could also potentially showcase and call for further innovative approaches to sustain and fill gaps in the ocean observations that provide our data and knowledge of the effects of climate change and ocean acidification on ocean biodiversity and underpin GBF implementation and monitoring. Some success stories were recently highlighted in the UN Ocean Decade publication [“An Ocean of Life: how the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development is supporting implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework”](#)

Suggested experts:

- Dr Gemma Harper (OBE), Chief Executive of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
- Professor Gideon Henderson, Chief Scientific Advisor, Defra
- Professor Widdicombe, Director of Science at PML
- Professor John Pinnegar, Principal Scientist and Lead Advisor on climate change at Cefas
- Professor Alex David Rogers, National Oceanography Centre

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

Suggested expert:

- Rear Admiral Angus Essenhigh (UK National Hydrographer) UKHO

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

Suggested experts:

- Professor Gideon Henderson, Chief Scientific Advisor, Defra
- Professor Grant Stentiford, Chief Scientist at Cefas, Head of the OIE Collaborating Centre for Emerging Aquatic Animal Diseases and, co-Director of the Sustainable Aquaculture Futures Centre at the University of Exeter

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

Preliminary input on what the concept note could cover:

- The ocean features in many global science-policy dialogues including the World Ocean Assessment (WOA), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Global Environment Outlook (GEO). The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (UN Ocean Decade) is calling for transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development, providing a framework where ocean science is co-developed with policy and society stakeholders, from local to regional, to global levels. At the half-way point of the UN Ocean Decade, an ocean action panel that showcases success stories resulting from global ocean science-policy processes and opportunities to transform and improve the science-policy interface, will be valuable to further leverage science and other traditional ocean knowledge to achieve the ocean we want by 2030.

Suggested experts:

- Dr Gemma Harper (OBE), Chief Executive of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
- Professor Gideon Henderson, Chief Scientific Advisor, Defra
- Dr Claire Evans, principal research scientist in biogeochemistry at the National Oceanography Centre

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

Preliminary input on what the concept note could cover:

- The UK considers the BBNJ Agreement an important step toward coordinated global action to tackle the climate and nature crisis. The Agreement demonstrates the ongoing role of multilateral institutions in facing global challenges and cements the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the cornerstone of ocean governance.
- It will enable greater conservation of the two-thirds of the ocean that lies beyond national jurisdiction and will support the delivery of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – that includes the target to effectively conserve and manage at least 30% of the ocean by 2030.
- The UK considers that identifying needs, particularly from developing countries, is important and would support an Ocean Action panel that explores the barriers to ratification and implementation, alongside proposals for practical measures of support.

Suggested experts:

- Alison Swaddling, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Alan Evans, Head of Marine Policy at the National Oceanography Centre

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

Preliminary input on what the concept note could cover:

- The UK considers UNOC3 a significant opportunity, post-CBD COP16, and UNFCCC COP29, to assess progress in mobilising finance from all sources for the ocean and in support of SDG14. UNOC3 is a milestone to assess the contribution of blue finance mobilised to nature and climate and poverty reduction targets including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The UK would be interested in discussions, via an Ocean Action Panel, on high-integrity financial mechanisms spanning different geographic and social contexts that are proven to generate successful blended finance models that support long-term outcomes for the ocean and people.
- The UK would also value a focus on ensuring the indicators for assessing blue finance mobilisation are fit for purpose.

Suggested experts:

- Sara Rustling, Blue Planet Fund Deputy Director, Defra
- Julius Court, Chief Operating Officer Conservation International

Proposed UK suggestions for experts to join panels				
Name	Organisation	Title	Area of expertise	Panel
Rear Admiral Angus Essenhigh	UKHO	UK National Hydrographer	Admiral Essenhigh is the UK's National Hydrographer, leading the UK's efforts to improve the mapping of the marine estate. He is the Chair of the Steering Group for the UK Centre for Seabed Mapping, a collaboration of 34 UK public sector organisations, and also leads the engagement with a further 62 partner nations and territories in this regard.	f. Advancing Sustainable Ocean Based Economies, sustainable maritime transport and coastal community resilience
Alison Swaddling	Commonwealth Secretariat	Adviser, Ocean Governance	Adviser for Commonwealth Secretariat providing technical advice and assistance to governments on the management and regulatory regimes of their ocean spaces.	i. Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the UNCLOS
Dr Carl O'Brien (CBE)	Cefas	Defra Chief Fisheries Science Adviser, President of the ICES Council.	Carl is a respected figure within fisheries science internationally and has very recently been appointed as President of the leading intergovernmental body for marine science and conservation, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). His insights into international collaboration and policy-making, which are vital for addressing global fisheries issues	a. Fostering sustainable fisheries management including supporting small-scale fishers
Professor Michelle Devlin	Cefas	Principal scientist at Cefas an honorary professor at University of East Anglia.	Michelle is renowned internationally for her work on catchment management, and in particular expertise on water quality and pollution issues. She most recently co-authored a series of toolkits for pollution monitoring and assessment in coastal ecosystems and contributed to the Scientific Consensus Statement for the Great Barrier Reef, co-leading a chapter on 'human dimensions of water quality improvement and emerging science'.	d. Preventing and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities
Professor John Pinnegar	Cefas	Principal Scientist and	Extensive expertise and distinguished career in marine climate science include authorship of a chapter for the	e. Leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages

		Lead Advisor on climate change at Cefas	6 th IPCC report as well as key contributions to past UK Climate Change Risk Assessments. He has in-depth knowledge and practical experience in the assessment and modelling of fisheries, ecosystems and marine food-webs, and in the administration and management of fisheries and climate change research programmes in the UK and overseas.	
Professor Grant Stentiford	Cefas	Chief Scientist at Cefas, Head of the OIE Collaborating Centre for Emerging Aquatic Animal Diseases and, co-Director of the Sustainable Aquaculture Futures Centre at the University of Exeter	Led the development of the 'One Health Aquaculture' and 'All Hazards' concepts within Cefas and has more than 20 years' expertise in both the Government and academic fields of international aquaculture. His work in this arena is particularly relevant to the panel's focus on poverty eradication and food security, as it addresses the interconnectedness of aquatic health and global food resources. He recently chaired a session at the World One Health Congress in South Africa on 'One Food: A One Health approach for food systems transformation'	g. Promoting the role of sustainable food from the ocean for poverty eradication and food security.
Dr Gemma Harper (OBE)	JNCC	Chief Executive of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	Prior to joining JNCC, Gemma was Deputy Director of Marine policy and Deputy Race Champion in Defra. She was awarded an OBE for services to the marine environment in the New Year Honours 2021.	b, e, or h.
Professor Gideon Henderson	Defra	Chief Scientific Advisor	Professor Gideon Henderson was appointed Chief Scientific Adviser at Defra on 1 October 2019. He is also Director General for Science and Analysis. He has been Professor of Earth Sciences at the Department of Earth Sciences in the University of Oxford since 2006. He has also jointly held positions as Senior Research Fellow at University College, Oxford since 2012 and as Adjunct Associate Research Scientist at the Lamont	d, e, g, or h

			Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University since 1999. In 2013 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.	
Professor Widdicombe	Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML)	Director of Science at PML, since 2019	Director of Science PML, where he oversees the Western Channel Observatory, which forms a key part of the UK's contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goal indicator 14.3.1. As an internationally recognised marine researcher, he has published more than 160 peer reviewed papers and book chapters, has a H-index of 55 (WoS). He has a number of other roles, including Co-Chair of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network Executive Council, member of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the KMGBF, and Co-lead of the UN Ocean Decade Programme Ocean Acidification Research for Sustainability.	e. Leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages
Professor Howell	Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the University of Plymouth	Professor of Deep-Sea Ecology at Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the University of Plymouth.	Career research is focused on sustainable management of the deep ocean. Providing spatial information (maps) to support area-based management and decision-making and particularly the identification of Marine Protected Areas. Pioneered the development of habitat mapping approaches in the deep sea, and the application of modelled maps to environmental management and decision-making. She is the Co-lead of the UN Ocean Decade Challenger 150 Programme, a global initiative to map life in the deep ocean in support of UN SDGs. She has a significant and sustained national and international reputation for academic excellence in the field of deep-sea science and has published >70 peer reviewed publications, and > 20 advisory reports.	b. Conserving, sustainably managing and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems including deep-sea ecosystems.
Sara Rustling	Defra	Blue Planet Fund Deputy Director	Sara Rusling is the Deputy Director for International Sustainable Blue Finance in Defra. Sara heads up the UKs ODA marine programming, overseeing £310m investment from the Uks Blue	j. Mobilizing finance for ocean actions in the support of SDG14

			Planet Fund which supports developing countries to reduce poverty, protect and sustainably manage their marine resources and address human-generated threats across four key themes: biodiversity, climate change, marine pollution, and sustainable seafood.	
Julius Court	Conservation International	Chief Operating Officer	Before taking on this leadership role at Conservation International, Court worked for the government of the United Kingdom (UK), where he served as the Development Director and Deputy High Commissioner to Kenya	j. Mobilizing finance for ocean actions in the support of SDG14
Professor Daniel Jones	National Oceanography Centre	Head of the Ocean BioGeosciences Group	Prof. Daniel Jones is a deep-sea biologist and Head of the Ocean BioGeosciences Group at the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton UK. He specialises in understanding temporal and spatial patterns in deep-water ecosystems, including those impacted by anthropogenic disturbances. He applies his experience in working in the deep sea to improving environmental assessment and management including for deep-sea mining and offshore energy industries. He provides regular advice to government and engages in policy development. He has joined around forty research expeditions and worked in all the world's oceans. His 150+ scientific papers primarily focus on describing patterns and processes in deep-sea ecosystems. At present, he has a key role in many major international research initiatives focussed on environmental aspects of deep-sea mining and is leading a £5M UK research programme, SMARTEX, investigating the responses of ecosystems to deep-sea mining disturbance.	b. Conserving, sustainably managing and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems including deep-sea ecosystems.
Dr Claire Evans	National Oceanography Centre	Principal research scientist in biogeochemistry	Dr Claire Evans is a principal research scientist in biogeochemistry at the National Oceanography Centre, United Kingdom. Her mission is to integrate biogeochemical cycles into the larger socioeconomic context, specifically looking at opportunities, trade-offs	h. Increasing ocean-related scientific cooperation, knowledge, capacity building, marine technology and education to strengthen

			and threats arising from human interactions with the marine environment. To accomplish this she employs an interdisciplinary approach, utilizing analytical techniques, autonomous technologies, computational tools and socioeconomic analysis to generate data needed to support the sustainable management of natural resources. Dr Evans' approach is stakeholder-driven and her vision is to realise the benefit of her work by facilitating evidence-based policy making, relevant action and capacity development.	the science-policy interface for ocean health.
Professor Alex David Rogers	National Oceanography Centre	Marine Ecologist	Alex is a marine ecologist of more than 30 years' experience who is interested in how biodiversity is distributed in the ocean, especially in the deep sea and on tropical coral reefs. He is also interested in human impacts on the ocean and how to manage human activities to mitigate or reduce degradation of marine ecosystems. He has also undertaken studies and consultancies on the development of the sustainable blue economy in low- and middle-income countries. His scientific work has taken him to the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans as well as to the Caribbean investigating coral reef ecosystems, seamounts and deep-sea hydrothermal vents. Alex has worked with governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations in identifying human impacts, especially those from deep-sea fishing and climate change, and on the development of policy solutions to such problems. Alex has also published the book <i>The Deep: The Hidden Wonders of Our Ocean and How We Can Protect Them (Wildfire)</i> to increase ocean literacy for the public.	e. Leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages.
Alan Evans	National Oceanography Centre	Head of Marine Policy	Alan Evans is Head of Marine Policy at the National Oceanography Centre, UK. With 25 years' experience in science and technology research, he uses	i. Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their

			<p>knowledge generated through marine scientific research to support the development and delivery of ocean governance frameworks, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and its implementing Agreements. A key enabler to supporting the sustainable use and management of our ocean and seas is universal participation, to this end Alan engages with the global marine community at international forum and develops bi-lateral relationships, working with the UK and foreign governments and their agencies, members of the UN-Oceans family (in particular the IOC-UNESCO, ISA and DOALOS), the UK Overseas Territories and regional organisations. Alan holds several international positions including as Alternate Head of the UK Delegation at the IOC-UNESCO, NOC focal point as Observers at the ISA, a UK Delegate during the BBNJ negotiations and Chair of the IOC Capacity Development Group of Experts.</p>	<p>resources by implementing international law as reflected in the UNCLOS.</p>
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