**UNOPS inputs to the concept papers of relevant 'Ocean Action Panels' for the 2025 UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3)**

(9-13 June 2025, Nice, France)

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is pleased to respond to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs' invitation for input for the preparations of the ten "Ocean Action Panels" of the 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its overarching theme *"Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean"*. We are particularly grateful to France and Costa Rica for co-hosting the Conference.

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Infrastructure has a profound influence on the accelerated achievement of Goal 14. Infrastructure influences 92 per cent of all targets across the Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, it is responsible for 79 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions and will account for 88 per cent of all adaptation costs.

Much of the global infrastructure investment needs pertain directly or indirectly to oceans. Three billion people's livelihoods depend on the oceans. About 80 per cent of the pollution found in marine environments comes from land-based activities, and approximately 85 per cent of it is plastic. Many of these pertain to insufficient infrastructure, or unsustainable infrastructure investment choices, as the wrong infrastructure policy and investment choices use precious resources while locking-in unsustainable practices for decades. Inefficient infrastructure governance results in one-third of infrastructure spending being wasted, and this can surpass 50 per cent in low-income countries.

UNOPS is a United Nations resource for services and solutions across peace and security, humanitarian, and development efforts. Its mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. While UNOPS can expand capacity towards achievement of all the sustainable development goals, the focus is based on partners' demand and the needs of people and countries. Importantly, the organization has an implementation mandate to support the planning and implementation of infrastructure.

Through these implementation activities, UNOPS has over the years gained experience and technical expertise in accelerating action and fostering partnerships that conserve the oceans and ensure their more sustainable use. UNOPS works towards ensuring that partners work together to consider infrastructure decisions that embed sustainable development considerations, identifying the right types of infrastructure needed to achieve Goal 14. Ocean-releavant solutions UNOPS has experience in supporting range from waste management infrastructure, climate mitigation and adaptation measures, aquatic health, sustainability to food safety - to name but a few.

UNOPS' experience demonstrates that it is key to deliver actionable policy recommendations and strategies that spur investment and growth in the ocean blue economy while protecting, restoring and regenerating it. **Ensuring that implementation of these policies and financing is sustainable, and comes with the right scale and impact - i.e. <u>that there is no implementation gap</u> -** should be a key

thread across the Conference and Ocean Action Panels' outcomes. Experience to scale-up and fill the gap highlights the importance of:

- **Ensuring holistic approach to the planning, delivering and managing infrastructure**. One should look at all components of an infrastructure system, the physical, enabling and natural environments. Understanding what infrastructure assets a government owns, and what condition they are in, is fundamental to a government's ability to plan and prioritize infrastructure investments. This encompasses using best-practices and state-of-the-art tools that consider the diverse range of social, environmental and economic contexts in which infrastructure systems are embedded.

  Tools such as University of Oxford's National Infrastructure Systems Model for International contexts (NISMOD-Int) simulate the future of national infrastructure, quantifying future infrastructure needs and evaluating investment and policy options to meet those needs. In one recent application of the NISMOD-Int, UNOPS in partnership with the Government of St Lucia, revealed imminent challenges to the energy, transport, water, wastewater and solid waste systems, when considering climate change, residential population growth and increasing tourism on the island. This led to cross-ministerial planning to exploit interdependencies and realize systems efficiency improvements.

  A UNOPS-specific tool in this regard is the EnABLE Sustainable Infrastructure Tool. EnABLE has been developed to assess and identify the challenges and opportunities of government capacity (at a national, regional, or municipal level) to effectively plan, deliver, and manage sustainable, resilient, inclusive, and human-centered infrastructure systems. It looks at all aspects of the institutions and knowledge components of an infrastructure system. As an illustration, in the Mato Grosso State in Brazil, the results from EnABLE have supported the government to update and improve legislation which supports upstream planning to ensure the right assets are being selected and implemented to promote sustainable and resilient development.

- **Establishing a cohesive regulatory and financing environment.** Promoting alignment of relevant policy frameworks with financing for sustainable development, is key. UNOPS is exploring the scaling up of nature based solutions, ecosystem-based approaches to support the resilience, restoration and conservation of coastal ecosystems, including through public-private sector partnerships and technical assistance to enhance the bankability and feasibility of projects. Public procurement policies play an important role in this regard as drivers of systemic change allowing for more environmentally friendly practices. For instance, in its practice and as a leader in sustainable procurement, UNOPS encourages participation from MSMEs leading to local economic impact and shorter supply chains.

- **Ensuring sustainability as one of the ways to scale-up.** Scaling up projects and sustainability are closely linked and feed into each other. A local initiative should have continuity and a successful project implementation should not be based on a one-off intervention. UNOPS' approach to scaling up promotes capacity building of the communities it serves. The aim is to ensure that its impact continues beyond project life because those communities were enabled to crowd in additional resources. With regard to public procurement, the use of sustainability criteria in tenders can encourage participation from MSMEs leading to local economic impact and shorter supply chains.

- **Integrating knowledge management across projects.** Individual projects should become tools for sharing innovation, learning and triggering system change towards sustainability. One project implementation should serve as a model or incentive for leveraging additional resources, expanding and replicating. Such additional resources from governments, donors, including from the private sector, and other development partners form the basis of broader partnerships that can, when successfully promoted, achieve changes and multiple sustainable impacts.
  Within that context, UNOPS led efforts towards a guidance series on how to plan, deliver, and manage inclusive infrastructure, providing an insight into the systemic barriers that diverse social groups face and the conceptual framework for the inclusive infrastructure principles. There also sector-specific guidelines, relevant to oceans' infrastructure, notably on: transport, including freight and water transport (developed together with the International Labor Organisation, UN Women and Arup); inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure (in collaboration with UNICEF, the International Labor Organization, WaterAid and Arup); energy infrastructure development, including offshore energy infrastructure (in collaboration with the International Energy Agency (IEA) and Arup).

Building on the above, UNOPS is pleased to provide in Annex to this note detailed inputs in respect of Ocean Action Panels 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9, with examples of implementation gap solutions to accelerating Goal 14 achievement.

## Annex: UNOPS inputs to specific Ocean Action Panels

### Ocean Action Panel 1: UNOPS inputs to the concept paper on conserving, sustainably managing and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems including deep-sea ecosystems; Ocean Action Panel 7: UNOPS inputs to the concept paper on leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages

*Additionality on conserving, sustainably managing and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems and on leveraging ocean, climate and biodiversity interlinkages*

There is no doubt that aquatic ecosystem degradation undermines nearly all the Sustainable Development Goals and that collective efforts must be stepped up in a harmonized manner. The integration of traditional and indigenous knowledge into modern tools to create solutions that prioritized the sustainable use of ecosystems is critical to the ability to scale up and speed up SDG 14 implementation. It is key to raise awareness of the fundamental interlinkage between the ocean and the land and ensure that solutions address, in a more holistic manner, the triple-interlinked threat of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss, including issues such as nutrient pollution.

Infrastructure (lack of it, or its unsustainability) is a major factor in ecosystem degradation and global warming. It contributes to more than 79 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon emissions cause higher temperatures and acidity in the ocean, which then lead to bleaching of the coral reefs. In turn, acidification also affects food security and coastal protection, as well as the ocean's ability to moderate changes in the climate. If current rates of CO2 emissions from infrastructure continue, acidity is predicted to increase by 100-150 per cent by the end of the century. Cooperation between evidence-based ocean policy, financing, especially through market-based investment mechanisms for the protection and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems, and project implementation, based on partnerships among all actors, including governments, the private sector and civil society, is critical to conserving, sustainably managing and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems including deep-sea ecosystems.

Using infrastructure project implementation to address this threat involves looking at all parts of the process: from identifying projects with minimal emissions (e.g. using renewable energy over fossil fuels), to ensuring projects have lower embodied carbon in their materials, and designing assets so their operation requires lower energy input over their lifetime.

UNOPS' project implementation work includes integrated coastal zone management programs that combine both natural and man-made protection systems. Below are relevant examples from UNOPS' experience in supporting aquatic eco-systems, especially in respect of marine protected areas and marine spatial planning. These examples demonstrate the ability to lead on focusing on developing blue carbon ecosystems, such as mangroves and seagrass restoration, alongside engineered coastal barriers to provide dual benefits of coastal protection and carbon sequestration.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the United Republic of Tanzania*

UNOPS works closely with a great number of partners in all regions of the world to support efforts in conserving, sustainably managing and restoring degraded coastal ecosystems. In Tanzania, UNOPS

implemented the construction of a seawall to increase the resilience of coastal areas together with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). The two agencies worked together to coordinate the construction of 2,400 meters of coastal defense structures in combination with widespread mangrove and coral rehabilitation. The large-scale sea defense project along the country's coastline contributes to climate adaptation efforts towards the annual average of 800,000 Tanzanians that stand to be impacted by flooding caused by rising sea levels between 2070 and 2100. Around five million people currently live in Dar-es-Salaam, a coastal metropolis at risk of flooding. With financial support from the Adaptation Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund, and the Government of Tanzania, seawalls were constructed in seven sites along Tanzania's coast. The project included the rehabilitation of approximately 1,000 hectares of mangrove habitat across Tanzania's coastline. Up to 2000 meter-squared of coral reefs were also restored.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the Republic of Kiribati*

In the Asia Pacific region, UNOPS partnered with the Government of Kiribati, UNEP, and Child Fund Kiribati to implement a coastal protection project aimed at enhancing the resilience of coastal communities in Kiribati against rising sea levels and extreme weather events. The project focused on building natural barriers using mangroves, constructing seawalls and employing community-based coastal management approaches. This initiative addressed the immediate threat posed by climate change to coastal areas, which are highly susceptible to erosion, flooding and saltwater intrusion, affecting livelihoods, food security and access to clean water. This implementation project output was (1) development of natural coastal barriers with the nature-based approach; (2) construction of sea walls to protect critical infrastructure (a hospital) and residential areas; and (3) community training programs in coastal management and climate resilience.

*Examples of implementation gap solution in Mexico*

UNOPS works together with the Government of Mexico on several projects that prioritize the implementation of coordinated and integrated sustainable ecosystem-based management approaches (EBM) to address the transboundary concerns in order to control and reduce pollution; recover living marine resources (LMR) and rehabilitate marine and coastal ecosystems. Restoration mangrove programmes will be established with local community leaders to improve water quality and coastal habitats of wetlands. The historical degradation of mangroves will also be documented to establish a solid baseline for demonstrating results in ecosystem health following the restoration activities. It is expected that through this project, 3,000 hectares of mangrove forests under improved management will contribute to an increase in local fish population and climate adaptation. At least 50 % of the leaders in selected work mangrove restoration sites and implementation of all activities are women and they will be critical in supporting the Government of Mexico's assessment of a "Blue Carbon" economy in coastal ecosystems. Mexico will be enabled to improve the effectiveness of management of threats such as coral bleaching by strengthening the technical capacities of relevant monitoring staff to conduct rapid assessments of coral reef vulnerability and resilience; capturing, collecting, disseminating and sharing relevant databases and information from biological monitoring systems.

Similarly, UNOPS supports the Government of Mexico in the context of its Implementation of the Environmental Monitoring Program and improvement of the Information Systems, in the development and implementation of a Marine Water Quality Alert System. This system measures water quality based on the optical properties of the water, as well as estimates from models of chemical water parameters (e.g., NO3, PO4, pH, and O2). The results of the combined analysis of in situ and satellite data will be integrated into the SIMAR platform (one access) as part of a marine water quality monitoring system for the Gulf of Mexico. The project also implements the satellite-based Early Warning System for Phytoplankton Bloom (red algae) events, using satellite information from the Gulf of Mexico. This system will be integrated into SIMAR and will include data on a set of priority parameters that will trigger an alert based on pre-established thresholds. The system includes timely notification to Health authorities, which is responsible for issuing public alerts related to the presence of phytoplankton bloom events (whether harmful or not). To achieve these objectives, free satellite data will serve as the main source of information for the system, utilizing resources such as SENTINEL-2/3 and MODIS-AQUA/TERRA. The project outputs also include, besides Space-Time Evaluation of Water Quality and Phytoplankton Bloom Events, the publication of a scientific article based on the space-time study, the development and implementation of a citizen science web tool to document observations of red tide events in the Gulf of Mexico, and of a field sampling protocol to monitor phytoplankton bloom events (Harmful Phytoplankton Blooms).

## Ocean Action Panel 4: UNOPS inputs to the concept paper on preventing and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities

*Additionality that UN partnerships bring on preventing and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities*

Pollution travels significant distances to the sea, including from inland sources. Eighty percent of debris in the ocean comes from the land, for which poor waste management is partially responsible. Over eight million tonnes of plastic flow into the ocean every year, which can then remain in the environment for centuries. This means oceans could contain more plastic than fish by 2050. Poor waste management infrastructure can have far-reaching consequences; for instance, burning waste emits greenhouse gasses, which in turn harms the oceans. Sustainable waste management infrastructure is therefore the key to curtailing such negative effects when addressing these challenges. Lack of sustainable wastewater management infrastructure also poses a risk to oceans. Close to 80 percent of the world's wastewater is released without being treated to the required standards, and in developing economies, an estimated 80-90 per cent of wastewater flows directly into bodies of water without any treatment at all, which ultimately makes their way into the oceans, negatively impacting the environment, economy and health along the way. Proper wastewater infrastructure prevents pollution and enables treated water to be reused, which can not only help protect the oceans, but also support industry and agriculture, and create more jobs.

There is a genuine and substantiated need for investment in capacity-building, facilities and projects addressing this, especially in those countries where marine pollution is having a disproportionate impact on food system safety and security. The cost of addressing marine pollution, and notably plastic pollution are modest compared with the cost of inaction.

UNOPS' project implementation capacity is based on leveraging the potential of public private partnerships in generating innovative approaches to solving marine pollution. Below are some examples of project implementation demonstrating how action based on galvanized partnerships, including through capacity-building, has a critical role in minimizing the impact of human activities on the marine environment.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*

In Sri Lanka, together with partners such as the Kattankudy Urban Council, the European Union and Mobitel Sri Lanka, UNOPS implemented a sustainable waste management programme in the coastal town of Kattankudy in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Before the implementation of the programme, the Kattankudy's lagoon and surrounding area were used as a dumpsite by the urban council, due to the lack of a designated waste disposal area and a sustainable waste-management plan. UNOPS provided support in infrastructure, financial, and operational planning and management, including the establishment of monitoring systems, such as an internet-based waste collection tracking system, which directly impacted on the prevention of marine pollution from land-based activities. UNOPS teamed up with a leading mobile service provider to implement a modern tracking system to monitor the waste collection fleet and improve efficiency in the waste collection process. A total of 45,000 residents were also educated on the importance of waste segregation, waste reduction, compost production, income generation, risks associated with improper waste handling and importantly, the 3R concept of "Reducing, Reusing and Recycling". Finally, in order to improve the economic sustainability of the programme, income generation activities were also established.

*Example of implementation gap solution in Costa Rica*

In Costa Rica, in the South Caribbean coast of the country and through an agreement with the Costa Rican Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers, UNOPS is completing an environmental and public health improvement project, through the collection, treatment and safe disposal of the wastewater generated in the community of Puerto Viejo de Limón. The Sanitary sewage system and wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) built by UNOPS would impact not only the inhabitants of Puerto Viejo but also all the tourists which drastically increase the size of the community. UNOPS` participation in this project consists of its project management, which includes the development of basic studies, design of works, construction, supervision and start-up of the project. Currently, the project is in its final construction phase, and has already begun the progressive connection of users and the start-up of the system. The main infrastructure components of the project include nine kilometers of sanitary sewer piper; two wastewater pumping stations; two kilometers of pressurized pipes to conduct wastewater to the WWTP; a three-stage wastewater treatment plant, with tertiary disinfection treatment and an underwater discharge pipeline in the Caribbean sea. As a result, the quality of the water to be disposed of in the sea exceeds national requirements and could even be used in future irrigation or water reuse projects.

**Ocean Action Panel 5: UNOPS inputs to the concept paper on fostering sustainable fisheries management including supporting small-scale fishers; Ocean Action Panel 9: UNOPS inputs to the**

**concept paper on promoting the role of sustainable food from the ocean for poverty eradication and food security**

*Additionality on promoting the role of sustainable food from the ocean for poverty eradication and food security and on promoting the role of sustainable food from the ocean for poverty eradication and food security*

Aquatic foods play a crucial role in food security. Support for sustainable fishing is key to food security, and special attention is necessary to small-scale and artisanal fishers.

UNOPS has developed suites of implementation gap solutions that are critical for food and nutrition security, sustainability, and small-scale fishers' employment. This includes integrated support to infrastructure and the necessary regulatory and policy frameworks. UNOPS is targeting vulnerable coastal communities around the world by integrating climate adaptation solutions, such as community-based hydroponics systems and renewable-powered cold storage units. For instance, on the basis of its procurement mandate, UNOPS has worked in the Pacific to assist small-scale fishers (e.g. chest freezer initiative in Mili Atoll).

*Example of implementation gap solution in the Republic of Mozambique*

As part of the Northern Recovery Crisis Project in Mozambique, UNOPS is supporting coastal protection and the development of sustainable livelihood with fish farming. In respect of Fish Farming Tanks, UNOPS provided a total of 27 fish farming tanks that have been constructed in the districts of Chiure (7), Montepuez (9), and Namuno (11). These tanks are part of ongoing efforts to promote sustainable aquaculture initiatives and provide economic opportunities for local communities. On fisheries support, in the district of Metuge, UNOPS worked closely with the communities to support small-scale fishers by procuring boats, engines, nets, sacks with floats, anchors with chains, signal buoys, life jackets, rolls of fishing net sewing thread, and fire extinguishers to support fishing activities.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*

The Nilwella harbor sits along the southern coast of Sri Lanka where more than 2,000 families make their living from fishing activities. The Nilwella harbor that one sees today was nothing more than a blueprint. A partial breakwater stood in its place. The breakwater was shallow, had no quay walls for boats to dock and made fishers' navigation very challenging. The larger multi-day boats could not pull-up close to shore and smaller boats would travel back and forth to unload the catch. This used up valuable time and resources and it delayed the supply of fresh seafood to interested buyers. The construction of the harbor by UNOPS changed how the local community works. The Nilwella harbor now includes: breakwaters, a quay wall, an administration building, a weigh bridge, fencing, a security depot, an ice maker, fuel storage and dispensing systems, and a fresh water storage and dispensing system. Hundreds of fishermen are now able to unload yellowfin tuna, sailfish and swordfish directly onto the shores. Buyers — market sellers or intermediaries — can make their purchases as soon as the boats dock and are able to offer a better price for the fish.

*Example of implementation gap solution in Mexico*

In Mexico, through its Implementation of the Strategic Action Program of the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem project, UNOPS is supporting the government of Mexico to develop more effective small-scale fisheries fishing regulation systems through the implementation of fisheries management plans (FMPs). Management plans bring together and harmonize other instruments such as Mexican Official Standards (NOM), areas of refuge, fishing concessions, land ordering programs and marine protected areas management programs, among others. The project will support the implementation of two new FMPs for small scale fisheries of species of economic and ecological importance: red grouper (*Epinephelus morio*) and brown shrimp (*Farfantepenaeus aztecus*) as well as the implementation of 12 existing FMPs. Overall, IMIPAS with the support of CONAPESCA (both Federal authorities of Fisheries Regulations), local fishery authorities and fisher communities will be assisted in the performance of activities that will reduce illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and improve management of resources through the "*Establishment of partnerships to improve data collection and promote research, in support of the reduction of Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing*" and "*Developing/strengthening an enabling environment for Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) management/policy*". The objective, through the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (VGSSF) that were developed to provide complementary guidance to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries is, ultimately to positively impact on food security and poverty eradication.

**Ocean Action Panel 8: UNOPS inputs to the concept paper on promoting and supporting all forms of cooperation, including ocean governance, transboundary cooperation, especially at the regional and subregional level**

*Additionality on promoting and supporting all forms of cooperation*

A siloed approach to implementation is not conducive to leveraging the huge opportunities that the ocean offers for addressing poverty, hunger, nutrition, economic development and other SDGs. All forms of cooperation are needed to restore the ability of the ocean to produce ecosystem services. This is critical to marine and coastal communities where identities, culture and livelihoods are closely connected to the ocean.

UNOPS has worked closely with a number of partners from the UN family and across the board to ensure the development of integrated cross-sectoral solutions to a number of implementation gaps that maximize ocean health, resilience and productivity.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, Republic of Nauru, Republic of Kiribati, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Tuvalu*

On the basis of a large cross-sectoral UN system and sub-regional government collaboration, UNOPS has engaged in two joint programmes alongside partners, including ITU, FAO, ILO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNODC, OHCHR and national governmental bodies, aimed at leveraging digital transformation and economic diversification. The aim was to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs and strengthen

community resilience in several Pacific countries which rely on ocean resources. The first programme focused on the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of Nauru, and the Republic of Kiribati. It aimed at enabling policy frameworks and improved access to resilient broadband connectivity in remote islands, thereby transforming them into "smart islands/digital villages" with enhanced access to digital services.

The second joint programme called the Economic Transformation programme covered Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Tuvalu. It focused on improving livelihoods, social protection, human rights and community resilience by adopting economic diversification strategies, supporting MSMEs and modernizing public employment services to ensure sustainable growth. The initiative targeted vulnerable groups, particularly women, youth and persons with disabilities. Its purpose was to enhance economic opportunities and community resilience, especially in sectors impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The output of the project was (1) the establishment of resilient broadband infrastructure and smart islands/digital villages across five countries; (2) the development of a legislative framework for digitalization policy, digital economy and digital finance; (3) training programs for the pilot community members on digital skills, business development and economic resilience; and (4) support for MSMEs, public employment services and formalization of the informal economy.

UNOPS intends to scale up on this successful model by expanding digital and economic transformation initiatives through digital entrepreneurship for MSMEs, integrating e-governance solutions, and enabling blockchain for financial inclusion across more Pacific Islands. This will involve increased cross-sectoral collaboration with local governments and international agencies to implement enabling digital legislation and strengthen digital skills for sustainable economic growth.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the Republic of Marshall Islands*

UNOPS has engaged in a Roadmap for Health and Coastal Infrastructure Resilience of the Marshall Islands project, funded by the Coalition of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). This multi-stakeholder global partnership aims at building resilience into infrastructure systems to ensure sustainable development. In this particular project, CDRI and UNOPS are aiming to enhance the resilience of coastal and health infrastructure to climate change and other risks. The Marshall Islands face multiple challenges due to vulnerability to sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and limited resources. The project seeks to address these challenges by improving the capacity of infrastructure systems to withstand shocks and ensuring equitable access to essential services, particularly in the health sector. The project will be implemented in four key steps that will require collaboration towards three assessments toward the development of Resilient Coastal and Health Infrastructure Roadmap. The first assessment will be a Resilient Coastal and Health Infrastructure Gap Assessment to identify existing challenges and opportunities for enhancing infrastructure resilience. This assessment will involve mapping infrastructure, analyzing its performance against sustainable development goals (SDGs) and climate action, and employing a risk-based approach to recovery and adaptation. The second assessment is a Health Infrastructure Climate Event Readiness Assessment that focuses on the readiness of key health assets, including the Majuro Hospital, to withstand climate shocks and ensure their continued operation during such events. The third assessment is an Enabling Environment Assessment for Resilient Coastal and Health Infrastructure which will be conducted to analyze the country's capacity for planning, delivering,

and managing infrastructure. This assessment will assess governance structures, policies, stakeholder involvement, financing mechanisms, and data management throughout the infrastructure lifecycle. The findings will guide recommendations for strengthening the enabling environment and improving infrastructure adaptation. These assessments will feed into the development of a Resilient Coastal and Health Infrastructure Roadmap, which will outline short, mid, and long-term actions for building resilient infrastructure in alignment with government priorities and the SDGs. The participatory approach will ensure ownership by local actors and facilitate the implementation of the roadmap. The Sustainable Infrastructure Financing Tool (SIFT) will also support the identification of financing opportunities for the proposed actions. UNOPS is also exploring a scaling up of similar implementation gap solutions, ensuring that such solutions are based on evidence-based roadmaps.

*Example of implementation gap solution in the wider Caribbean region*

The wider Caribbean region is home to some of the most charismatic ocean biodiversity and ecosystems in the world. Coordinating across languages and cultures presents a challenge to the collective governance and effective use of donor resources to the preservation of the region's natural capital. The Ocean Coordination Mechanism (OCM) for the Wider Caribbean region facilitates coordination and collaboration to safeguard healthy marine and coastal ecosystems as a key driver for human wellbeing and thriving sustainable ocean-based economies. UNOPS, as the secretariat of this coordination mechanism, supports the OCM in its delivery of a new regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and the mobilization of wide-ranging partnerships to support and help finance its implementation. In addition to acting as the secretariat for the OCM, the PROCARIBE+ project (full title - functioning Protecting and Restoring the Oceans Natural Capital, Building Resilience and Supporting Regional wide investment for sustainable Blue socio-Economic Development) is facilitating critical collaboration across the region in the areas of Fisheries Traceability and creation of Fisheries replenishment zones (Bahamas, Belize, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Panama, and Suriname); Marine Spatial Planning, Marine Protected areas and other area based management tools. Including supporting the management of one of the region's largest Transboundary MPAs between Colombia and Dominican Republic; Mainstreaming Oceans and Coasts into Climate Action by creating enabling conditions of blue carbon financing and the integration of Blue carbon into Nationally Determined contributions, and small grants for Ocean based community enterprises in Small Island Developing States like Antigua and Barbuda, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia.