



**UN OCEAN
CONFERENCE
NICE 2025
FRANCE**

2025 UN Ocean Conference

9 June – 13 June 2025

UNOC3 Side Events – Guidelines

Last updated on 10 January 2025

Background

The high-level [2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development \(the 2025 UN Ocean Conference\)](#) will be held in Nice, France, from 9 – 13 June 2025, co-hosted by France and Costa Rica.

The overarching theme of the Conference is **“Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean”**. The Conference, comprising an opening segment, ten plenary sessions, ten Ocean Action Panels and a closing segment, aims to support further and urgent action to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and identify further ways and means to support the implementation of SDG 14. It will build on existing instruments to form successful partnerships towards the swift conclusion and effective implementation of ongoing processes that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean. The Conference shall adopt, by consensus a brief, concise, action oriented and intergovernmentally agreed declaration, which along with a list of voluntary commitments, will be referred to as **“Nice Ocean Action Plan”**.

The Conference will **involve all relevant stakeholders, bringing together Governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, other interested international bodies, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities and other actors** to assess challenges and opportunities relating to, as well as actions taken towards, the implementation of Goal 14.

What are side events?

In parallel to the official program, a **limited number of high-level side events** may be organized by UN Member States, UN entities, International Organizations (IGOs), and all accredited stakeholders. These side events are designed to offer additional spaces for registered participants to collaborate, share knowledge, and accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and the 2030 Agenda in general. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss critical issues, exchange best practices, foster partnerships and promote international cooperation. Side events also provide opportunities to showcase voluntary commitments registered on the [Voluntary Ocean Commitments database](#).

Who can apply to host a side event?

- Member States, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), UN entities and all other accredited stakeholders can apply to organize a side event.
- Information regarding accreditation and participation of relevant categories is available [here](#).

What are the themes for side event?

- Side events should be closely related to the main theme of the 2025 UN Ocean Conference: **“Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean”**. They should address *innovative ways and means to support the implementation of SDG 14*.

What is the format of side events?

There will be three categories of side events: **1) in-person at the Conference Venue (Blue Zone), 2) off-site in-person across Nice and 3) virtual**.

- **In-person at the Conference Venue indicates that the side event will be held within the Blue Zone.**
- **In-person side events at the Conference Venue (Blue Zone)** may only be held in-person (no hybrid participation). Participation of speakers, moderators, organizers and attendees is restricted to duly registered participants of the UNOC3 Conference.
- Side events inside the Conference Venue will be held in parallel with the official sessions of the Conference and must not exceed 75 minutes in duration.
- No interpretation services are available for side events at the Conference Venue due to limited capacity. For off-site or virtual side events, organizers may arrange interpretation at their own cost.
- In case space is not available within the Conference Venue, side event organizers are encouraged to find an alternative location across Nice, or to organize the event virtually.

- Organizers of virtual side events are encouraged to organize sessions at times that accommodate various time zones to engage a global audience.

How can I apply for a side event?

- All interested and accredited entities/organizations should submit applications for side events through official applications forms (to be publicized in January 2025). More information will be available here: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025/side-events>
- Please note that Member States should apply through their Permanent Missions in New York only.
- Open call for side events for the 2025 UN Ocean Conference:
 - **In-person side event held inside the Conference Venue (Blue Zone):**
 - Open call to launch in January 2025
 - Deadline: 14 March 2025 (TBC)
 - **In-person side event held off-site in an alternative location in Nice**
 - Open call to launch in January 2025
 - Deadline: 21 April 2025 (TBC)
 - **Virtual side event**
 - Open call to launch in January 2025
 - Deadline: 21 April 2025 (TBC)
- Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.
- Only applications received through the official forms will be considered. Applications received via email, or any other channel will not be considered.

What are the criteria for selection of a side event?

- In view of the anticipated large number of requests and taking into consideration the limited space and time available for side events, the following principles will be applied by the Secretariat when conducting the selection of side events:
 - Side events can be organized by UN Member States, accredited Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), UN entities, and other **accredited** stakeholder organizations.
 - Priority will be given to events that are organized by Member States and those organized in partnership by several networks/organizations. All interested parties are strongly encouraged to partner with others to organize a side event and thereby increasing the chances of being included in the official side event programme.
 - Priority will also be given to proposals that demonstrate a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral, multi-country, inclusive, gender-balanced and intergenerational

approach. Organizers are encouraged to incorporate these elements when planning and designing their side event.

- Proposed side events should be closely related to the overarching theme of the Conference and address innovative ways and means to support the implementation of SDG 14.
- Proposed side events should highlight their connection to the [Voluntary Ocean Commitments database](#), such as by announcing new commitments to the database or sharing outcomes from the implementation of existing ocean commitments. Organizers who have registered or will register voluntary commitments will be given priority consideration.
- Applications for in-person side events inside the Conference Venue should be limited to ONE per entity. Accredited organizations/entities can host multiple side events as co-organizers.
- Only one organization should submit the application for the proposed joint side event. Duplicative proposals will not be considered.

How does the selection process work?

- The Secretariat will identify a limited number of selected side events, taking into consideration the capacity of the Conference Venue and based on the above-mentioned criteria while ensuring regional and thematic balance. Only organizers of approved applications will be notified directly by email. Please refer to the timeline below for the specific dates.
- To accommodate more side event proposals, the Secretariat may contact side event organizers to explore merging proposals that share similar themes and address common features.
- Only side events that have been approved through the official application process will be included in the side event programme to be made available on the official Conference website.

How will side events be promoted?

- The Secretariat will promote the full schedule of side events (in-person inside the Conference Venue, in-person off-site, and virtual) that will be made available on the Conference website: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025/side-events>.
- The Secretariat will not produce flyers, distribute notices, or run other publicity efforts for individual side events.
- Side event organizers are responsible for promoting their events through their respective online and social media channels.

Can my organization apply for both an in-person and a virtual side event?

- Yes, it is possible to apply for both an in-person and a virtual side event, it is up to the organizers to choose a format.

- However, due to space limitations, please note that organizations can submit only ONE application to host an in-person side event inside the Conference venue. If more than one application is submitted by one organization for an onsite in-person side event, only the first application will be considered.

What are the responsibilities for an organizer of a side event?

IMPORTANT! Charging participants money in participation of ANY side events - both in-person (on site and off-site) and virtual - is STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

In-person side events (inside the Conference venue)

- It is the responsibility of the organizers of side events to ensure that all organizers, speakers, attendees and supporting staff are duly registered to attend the UNOC3 Conference. The Secretariat will not be able to accommodate participants after registration deadlines.
- All side events hosted inside the Conference Venue should be open to all participants in possession of a valid access badge issued by UN Security, subject to room capacity.
- Organizers of closed events or by-invitation-only events aiming for an exclusive audience are advised to obtain alternative locations outside the Conference Venue.
- Side events inside the Conference Venue will be held in parallel with the official sessions of the Conference and must not exceed 75 minutes in duration.
- No interpretation services are available for side events at the Conference Venue due to limited capacity.
- There are no costs for side events organized within the Conference Venue. If available, there will be costs for live transmission of the event through the UN Web TV (Webcast).
- The side event organizers' responsibilities include – but are not limited to – the invitation and travel arrangements for speakers including visa and security clearance, as needed; the oversight of the “run of show”, checking registration status of speakers and moderation of the entire event, including strict time management and note taking.
- It is strongly recommended that each side event has its own webpage where interested participants can find more information regarding the event. Side event organizers are encouraged to upload concept notes, agendas, speakers and other resources relevant to their events. The [official UNOC3 website](#) will only publish the titles, organizing partners, one-line description, focal point and webpage link for each event. It is the responsibility of side event organizers to provide additional information on their own webpage.
- No hybrid events are allowed inside the Conference Venue as there is limited technical equipment.
- All events should strive to be paper-free to minimize the environmental impact of the Conference. Likewise, no single use plastics or other containers should be brought on-site or be made available to participants. The Secretariat reserves the right to remove any printed materials and single-use plastic items found in the meeting rooms.
- The sale of printed materials or any goods inside the venue is strictly prohibited.

- Side event organizers are advised not to set up displays or put posters on meeting room walls during a side event or at any other time during the Conference to avoid removal and loss of their materials.
- Food and drinks are strictly prohibited in the side event meeting rooms.
- The number of participants allowed in the meeting rooms onsite Conference Venue is subject to room capacity under guidance of UN Security.
- Organizers should provide a one-page summary of the key recommendations and messages within one week of the completion of the side event to the UN Secretariat.

In-person side events (outside Conference Venue, across the around Nice)

- Side event organizers are responsible for securing the event location and must bear ALL costs incurred.
- A list of potential off-site locations for side events will be made available by the host country (France) in due course. Side event organizers are solely responsible for liaising with off-site locations.
- The side event organizers' responsibilities include – but are not limited to – the invitation and travel arrangements for speakers including visa and security clearance, as needed; the oversight of the “run of show”, checking registration status of speakers and moderation of the entire event, including strict time management and note taking.
- It is strongly recommended that each side event has its own webpage where interested participants can find more information regarding the event. Side event organizers are encouraged to upload concept notes, agendas, speakers and other resources relevant to their events. The [official UNOC3 website](#) will only publish the titles, organizing partners, one-line description, focal point and webpage link for each event. It is the responsibility of side event organizers to provide additional information on their own webpage.
- Organizers should provide a one-page summary of the key recommendations and messages within one week of the completion of the side event to the UN Secretariat.

Virtual side events

- Side event organizers are responsible for choosing and hosting their virtual event platform (there is no preferred virtual platform) and must bear ALL costs incurred, including as they relate to platform use, technical support required, interpretation (if applicable) as well as publicizing and actively promoting their respective side events.
- Organizers will be responsible for online registration and follow-up with participants.
- The side event organizers' responsibilities include – but are not limited to – the invitation and travel arrangements for speakers including visa and security clearance, as needed; the oversight of the “run of show”, checking registration status of speakers and moderation of the entire event, including strict time management and note taking.
- It is strongly recommended that each side event has its own webpage where interested participants can find more information regarding the event. Side event organizers are

encouraged to upload concept notes, agendas, speakers and other resources relevant to their events. The [official UNOC3 website](#) will only publish the titles, organizing partners, one-line description, focal point and webpage link for each event. It is the responsibility of side event organizers to provide additional information on their own webpage.

- Organizers should provide a one-page summary of the key recommendations and messages within one week of the completion of the side event to the UN Secretariat.

Who can I contact about side events?

- Please make sure that you have read carefully all the points listed above before reaching out. More information about the side events process is available here: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025/side-events>.
- If you still have questions, please contact unoc2025@un.org indicating [Side Events] in the subject. Due to the large number of inquiries, the Secretariat will not be able to answer any questions that have already been explained in this Guidelines document.
- For more information on the 2025 UN Ocean Conference, please visit the main webpage: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025>.

Tentative timeline

Date	
January 2024	UNOC3 Side Events Guidelines will be posted on the official website
Week of 20 January 2025	Launch open call for side events 1) in-person inside the Conference Venue, 2) off-site and 3) virtual
14 March 2025	Deadline to submit applications for in-person inside the Conference Venue side events
Week of 14 April 2025*	Final decisions announced by UN Secretariat on selected in-person inside Conference Venue side events
21 April 2025	Deadline to submit applications for off-site and virtual side events
Week of 9 May 2025*	Final decisions announced by UN Secretariat on selected virtual and off-site side events

This is a **tentative timeline and will be adjusted as needed. The UNOC3 website will provide the most updated information and final timeline.*