



**Remarks by
National Ocean Policy Coalition
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Ocean Action Panel 6: Advancing Sustainable Ocean-Based Economies, Sustainable Maritime
Transport, & Coastal Community Resilience Leaving No One Behind**

Key opportunities exist to advance sustainable ocean economies, facilitate maritime transport, and enhance coastal community resilience, leaving no one behind.

Challenges to sustainable development in the marine context have included permitting obstacles and delays and judicial interventions that make sustainable development projects less economically and operationally viable.

Governments and stakeholders should therefore work together to identify and eliminate permitting process bottlenecks and streamline permitting processes, reform and/or clarify applicable laws, regulations, and guidance governing sustainable development projects where applicable, encourage private sector development and application of marine technologies and best practices, and incorporate industry-collected science, data, and information into decision-making.

To accelerate action to conserve and sustainably use the ocean, we also need ***partnerships*** between governments and industry that are effectively supported by governments and result in science-based products and outcomes that are utilized in decision-making, thereby incentivizing private sector participation and support for them.

Additionally, governments should promote and ensure regulators' review and acceptance of alternative compliance to regulations where new marine technologies and best practices meet or exceed the performance standards of traditional means to achieve compliance.

There are many examples of successful efforts that can serve to help inspire other effective partnerships. In the United States and Brunei, for example, the Rigs-to-Reefs program provides an opportunity for the energy industry and the national and state governments to work together to transform decommissioned offshore oil and gas structures into artificial biodiverse reef systems that serve as habitat to marine life and communities even after the structures are no longer in operation. Similar programs are under consideration in Malaysia and Thailand.

Lastly, ensuring that ocean policies and management decisions are guided by sound science to enable access for the responsible use, development, and enjoyment of marine resources is essential to advance effective ocean conservation and sustainable development.