



# **UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE NICE, FRANCE 2025**

## **UNOC3 Conference Side Event**

### **“Unlocking the Blue Economy: Financing and Partnerships for Marine Spatial Planning Successful Implementation”**

**10 June 2025, 12:15 – 13:30, Room 4**

**Organized by: Thailand, UNESCO-IOC including IOC-  
WESTPAC, Brazil, China, Fiji, France, Togo, European  
Commission, CODF, GEF, GIZ, World Bank**

#### **Background on the event (one paragraph)**

A thriving and sustainable blue economy require responsible and inclusive ocean use fostering economic growth while safeguarding marine ecosystems and communities. Marine Spatial Planning is a proven tool to balance economic, social, and environmental goals, ensuring science-based ocean governance. This side event aimed to bridge the implementation gap on MSP, bringing together high-level policymakers from governments and supporting organizations across the world to explore key challenges and opportunities in accelerating MSP. Discussions focused on innovative funding mechanisms, capacity development , and fostering impactful partnerships at national, regional, and global levels. The goal is to drive the transition to a sustainable ocean economy and advance the UNOC3 ambition in this area.

#### **Key Issues discussed (5-8 bullet points)**

The side event started with the announcements from 7 high level representatives (UNESCO-IOC, European Commission, Brazil, China, Fiji, Togo, Thailand) on MSP-related voluntary commitments. Followed by 2 panel discussions focused on innovative financing, capacity development, and partners to advance MSP towards sustainable blue economies:

## 1. **Ecosystem-Based and Knowledge-Based MSP**

- Ecosystem-based approach as a foundation to MSP, thus integrating challenges and solutions related to biodiversity and climate crisis.
- Ensuring stakeholder engagement and participation, while embracing traditional knowledge and local community involvement .
- Developing assessments for a knowledge-based marine spatial plan that identify gaps and addresses the needs and interests of diverse stakeholders

## 2. **Innovative Funding and Partnerships**

- Exploring new financing mechanisms for MSP.
- Promoting partnerships in MSP.
- Enhancing capacity development and technical support for developing countries.

### **Key recommendations for action / voluntary commitments (5-6 bullet points)**

There are five key takeaways and recommendations from the side event's discussions:

1. Advance MSP as a strategic and practical policy to balance ocean use and conservation while supporting a sustainable blue economy.
2. Promote ecosystem-based, inclusive, and science-driven approaches to ensure effective, just, and lasting outcomes.
3. Address capacity and financing challenges through synergistic partnerships by mobilizing innovative solutions and strengthening institutions.
4. Integrate MSP into other national policies such as blue economy, climate change and biodiversity, backed by clear action plans and broad stakeholder participation.
5. Enhance regional cooperation, support MSP networks, and track progress toward SDG 14.2

### **New Voluntary Commitments:**

- Thailand:
  - <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/advancing-conservation-and-sustainable-management-marine-and-coastal-ecosystems>
- UNESCO-IOC & European Commission:
  - <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/updated-joint-roadmap-accelerate-marine-maritime-spatial-planning-processes-worldwide>
- UNESCO-IOC/WESTPAC:
  - <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/accelerating-marine-spatial-planning-western-pacific-and-its-adjacent-areas>
- European Commission:
  - <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/investing-eur-41-m-maritime-spatial-planning-mediterranean-baltic-and-north-seas>
  - <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/further-accelerating-mspglobal-initiative>