

**Talking Points, Biliiana Cicin-Sain, President, Global Ocean Forum, Professor of Marine Policy, University of Delaware, Dialogue 7, June 9, 2017**

***This presentation generally addresses Question 4. Building on the existing regional and global instruments, how can enhanced cross-sectoral cooperation and integrated management be achieved and what partnerships could be promoted in that regard?***

**Presentation: Reviews challenges in the implementation of SDG 14 at national, regional, and global levels, discusses possible approaches to achieving greater cross-sectoral cooperation and integrated management especially at the global level, addresses the need for and opportunities for capacity development, and ends up with a brief discussion and voluntary initiatives in the cross-cutting topic of oceans and climate and the Blue Economy.**

## **1. Preface**

Recall the inception of SDG14 as a stand-alone goal, a huge accomplishment, entailing a multistakeholder coalition led by the Pacific Island States (the Global Ocean Forum organized the Friends of the Stand-Alone Oceans SDG). All nations ultimately came to appreciate the centrality of oceans for planetary survival and for achieving human wellbeing at national and global levels, and came to appreciate that the ocean, indeed, addresses all three pillars of sustainable development—environmental, social and economic.

As implementation of SDG14 begins, we must, therefore, strongly keep in mind the three dimensions, as well as the need to implement the Agenda 2030 as a whole (given the “integrated and indivisible character of all SDGs”) with its cross-cutting emphases on poverty reduction, equity, and justice.

Implementation of Agenda 2030 in the case of oceans also represents the coming together of the UNCLOS and UNCED/WSSD/Rio+20 streams of law and policy (which I will call the UNCED stream), which have typically been relatively separate from each other. Implementation of SDG 14 can and should be used to reinforce greater linkages between the UNCLOS and the UNCED streams.

## **2. Challenges of Implementation of SDG 14**

Challenges exist at national, regional, and global levels in implementing Agenda 2030.

### **a. National level**

#### ***1) SDG 14 will be superimposed on top of already existing national ocean policy frameworks***

Most nations already have extensive systems of laws and policies related to the oceans, many of a sectoral nature, but an increasing number of nations and regions, have cross-sectoral policies in place related to oceans and coasts (about 100 nations have cross-sectoral adopted cross sectoral policies related to the coast (integrated coastal management) and about 40 nations have adopted cross-sectoral policies related to their entire Exclusive Economic Zones. Implementation of SDG 14 will require governments and stakeholders to review the

existing ocean policy frameworks and reporting requirements to incorporate the new policy directions embedded in SDG 14.

*(Example: Findings from a comparative study of 15 national and 4 regional ocean policies, Routledge Handbook of National and Regional Ocean Policies (eds. B. Cicin-Sain, D. VanderZwaag, and M. Balgos, 2015:*

*--Wide Adoption of Common Principles of Integrated Ocean governance and Sustainable Development*

*Sustainable development/sustainability*

*Integrated management*

*Ecosystem-based management*

*Good governance*

*Adaptive management/best available science*

*The precautionary approach*

*The preservation of marine biodiversity*

*Stewardship*

*Multiple use management*

*Economic/social development and poverty alleviation*

*Note: Most nations/regions emphasize environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development. Targets related to social dimensions and poverty alleviation are less frequent (about 1/2 of national cases mentioned these factors).*

*From an institutional perspective, integrated ocean policy efforts typically involve inter-agency/inter-sectoral coordination mechanism, and a lead implementing agency(ies).*

*Many of these efforts are based on executive action, and only 27% are embedded in national ocean policy law.*

*Bottom line: We already have good experience with integrated governance at the national level--Need to support and further enhance these efforts, including through capacity building.*

Some implications:

--A baseline of the current status of SDG targets needs to be established with subsequent performance measurement by independent evaluation authorities

--National and regional ocean policy efforts, especially in Blue Economy, should emphasize poverty reduction more extensively, and explicitly incorporate targets from other SDGs (e.g., on gender).

**2) In a number of cases, SDG indicators, developed through the UN Statistical Committee, will need to be improved further**

Example 14.7. One of the most innovative of the SDG 14 targets. “By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.”

The indicator selected, 14.7.1, unfortunately, is very narrow and refers to only one marine use—fisheries.

“Sustainable fisheries as a percentage of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries,” making it a clearly incomplete indicator.

### ***3) National reporting requirements—can synergies be achieved with other reporting efforts?***

Nations will need to be reporting on their efforts and success at implementing SDG 14. How could/should such efforts be coordinated with:

--the national ocean/coastal policy reports that nations prepare on a periodic basis for national audiences

--the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that nations prepare for the UNFCCC (66% of nations submitting NDCs included oceans and coasts in their submissions, as did 38 out of 39 SIDS)

--the national communications nations are submitting to the Convention on Biological Diversity

Will necessitate greater capacity development, a question to which I return later.

## **b. Challenges at the Regional Level**

At the regional level, in various marine regions which may encompass areas within as well as outside national jurisdiction, SDG 14 implementation can take place through the coordinated action of regional entities such as Regional Seas Programs, Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs), and Large Marine Ecosystems. Such coordination efforts will take time, need global guidance, and will necessitate funding and capacity building.

Some work bringing together the Regional Seas Programs and the RFMOs is already taking place through various efforts (e.g. CBD and the Government of Korea, the deepsea project of the GEF FAO Common Oceans Program). Future efforts should also bring in the Large Marine Ecosystem Programs, which offer especially valuable experience in the application of transboundary diagnostic analysis.

## **c. Challenges at the Global Level**

Three major challenges are highlighted here:

1) *Weak or absent coordination mechanisms linking the various regimes related to oceans and to the UNCED policy streams, e.g., UNCLOS, CBD, UNFCCC, and among the UN ocean agencies, on a regular basis.* See discussion in number 3 below.

2) ***Monitoring and tracking of the implementation of Agenda 2030.*** Procedures are still evolving on this. It will be very important to determine existing baselines and to systematically track progress (or lack thereof) in implementation.

We should recall that there has been little formal tracking of the progress achieved on the ocean goals emanating from UNCED/WSSD/Rio+20. Informal efforts (such as the Global Ocean Forum's periodic "How Well Are We Doing Reports" tried, in part to fill this gap).

3) ***Implementation and monitoring and tracking of the 800+ Voluntary commitments which are emanating from the UN Ocean Conference.*** This is a great accomplishment and demonstrates how the ocean issues have captured the imagination and commitment of parties and civil society around the world.

It will be important to develop an authoritative and open procedure for tracking the implementation of the commitments and the level of success that may be realized, as well as to identify and encourage synergies among initiatives for maximum impact. It should be recalled that such monitoring and tracking did not take place following the submission of voluntary commitments at the 2002 WSSD, the 2012 Rio+20, and the 2014 Samoa SIDS summit, the Samoa Pathway, and that therefore we don't know how well these past initiatives are faring nor what kinds of impacts they have had.

### **3. Possible Enhancements to Achieve Greater Coherence at the Global Level**

#### **a. *Enhancement of the UN Oceans coordination mechanism***

UN system of ocean agencies is still largely sectoral. UN Oceans appears to work well as a platform for sharing communication among the UN agencies. "Sharing communication" is, however, only the first step in the "Continuum of cooperation/integration." The mechanism lacks funds/authority.

Approaches followed by other UN coordination mechanisms, such as UN Water and UN Energy might be considered. These UN coordination mechanisms are: Open to external groups from civil society, carry out joint activities, have independent sources of financial support.

The forthcoming review of UN Oceans should be open to external input from all parts of civil society; this was not the case in the previous review.

#### **b. *New possible coordination efforts***

I would like to suggest discussion/consideration of possible Annual coordination meetings regarding oceans, climate, biodiversity, among the UNCLOS institutions and the Rio Conventions (especially the UNFCCC and the CBD), open to multistakeholder input.

This would be the next logical step in the further coming together of the UNCLOS and UNCED/WSSD/Rio+20 streams of law and policy.

#### **4. Enhanced capacity development is essential to realizing the SDG 14 implementation**

In both the UNCED and the UNCLOS streams, important prescriptions on capacity development, which have only been partially realized. Emphasis has been on: 1) individual, rather than institutional and societal levels, 2) there has been greater emphasis on sectoral training/education (e.g. on fisheries), than on cross-sectoral aspects (e.g. integrated ocean policy).

Opportunity offered by the BBNJ process. Nations are seeing capacity development as an essential element of a new BBNJ regime. Have already defined principles, criteria, goals, etc. But there are not yet sufficient details on modalities, financing, clearinghouse mechanism.

Survey about capacity development needs regarding ABNJ and EEZs (carried out as part of the Common Oceans capacity project) showed that national and regional leaders identify capacity needs regarding ABNJ as a continuum spanning national EEZs and ABNJ, aimed at both strengthening cross-sectoral governance of national EEZs and understanding and addressing the special characteristics and management needs of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The mobilization of a multi-stakeholder effort to develop options for specific modalities and financing for capacity development related to ABNJ and to EEZs would seem to be an opportune initiative at present.

#### **5. Example of oceans and climate and the low carbon Blue Economy**

Oceans and climate are so intertwined, and most decision-makers and publics have come to understand this. Low carbon Blue Economy represents a major way to move toward a decarbonized economy taking care of the natural capital of the ocean.

But it is very difficult to bring the various regimes together on this—at the UNFCCC in the past, typically one has gotten “this is not part of our emissions reduction convention” (although this is changing/has changed), also it is often difficult in the ocean fora to bring in the climate issues.

And yet, we must deal and bring decisive action across these regimes. In this regard, we are very appreciative that this issue is cogently addressed in the Call to Action emanating from the UN Ocean Conference.

Agenda 2030 does address both SDG 14 (oceans and seas) and SDG 15 (climate). Implementation of Agenda 2030 can help to reinforce the synergistic relationship between oceans and climate and the oceans and climate policy regimes.

I am pleased to announce to the UN Ocean Conference the cross-cutting Voluntary Commitment on **Roadmap to Oceans and Climate Action (ROCA)** to contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. ROCA is a multi-stakeholder initiative involving governments, international agencies, NGOs, scientific institutions, private sector, and subnational authorities to advance the oceans and climate agenda (especially in the UNFCCC, the UN Ocean Conference, and in other United Nations fora), and at the national level in all countries. The ROCA works to implement the **Strategic Action Roadmap on Oceans and Climate: 2016-2021**, first discussed at the Oceans Day at the UNFCCC COP 21 in Paris 2015, and then prepared in detail by 37 international experts throughout 2016 and highlighted at the Oceans Action Day at the UNFCCC COP 22 Marrakech.

**The Roadmap presents analyses and recommendations in seven major areas for implementation in the next five years: 1. Central of role of oceans in regulating climate, 2. Mitigation, 3. Adaptation 4. Blue Economy, 5. Displacement, 6. Financing, and 7. Capacity development.**

For each of these issues, the Roadmap addresses:

- 1) the current status of the issue (and, as relevant, the science related to the issue)
- 2) the current state of play of the issue within the UNFCCC
- 3) the opportunities and pathways that may be available within the UNFCCC to advance the issue in the next five years
- 4) the opportunities and pathways that may be available outside of the UNFCCC to advance the issue in the next five years
- 5) financial considerations regarding each issue

The Roadmap report features a Foreword by H.E. Ambassador Ronald Jumeau, Ambassador for Climate Change and Small Island Developing State Issues, Republic of Seychelles; H.E. Ambassador Caleb Otto, former Permanent Representative of the Republic of Palau to the United Nations; and H.E. Ambassador Angus Friday, Ambassador to the United States of America, the United Mexican States, and the Organization of American States, Embassy of Grenada, Washington DC.<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to present.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see:

Roadmap to Oceans and Climate Action Report: <https://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/strategic-action-roadmap-on-oceans-and-climate-november-2016.pdf>

Summary of Roadmap: <https://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/final-roadmap-summary-nov-7-2016.pdf>

**Major Characteristics and Partners Roadmap to Oceans and Climate Action (ROCA)**

**Level:** Global

**Focus:** Cross-sectoral, across the range of issues on oceans and climate: Central role of oceans in climate; Mitigation; Adaptation; Blue Economy; Displacement; Financing; Capacity Development

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**Type of Partners Involved:** Governments, international agencies, provincial and local governments, civil society (NGOs, private sector, academic/scientific institutions)

**ROCA Leadership**

Global Ocean Forum \* Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO \* Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan \* Oceano Azul Foundation, Portugal

**Initial Partners**

Coastal Zone Canada Association \* Conservation International \* Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative \* Duke University \* EUCC \* Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \* Future Ocean Alliance \* IUCN \* Global Ocean Forum \* Government of Grenada \* Government of Palau \* Government of Seychelles \* Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO \* International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification\* Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan \* Oceano Azul Foundation, Portugal \* Ocean Recovery Alliance, Hong Kong\* Pacific Community \* Plymouth Marine Laboratory \* Scripps Institution of Oceanography \* South Pacific Regional Environment Programme \* The Nature Conservancy \* University of Delaware \* UN Environment \* World Ocean Network \* World Ocean Observatory \*

**Expressions of Interest in ROCA**

Expressions of interest to participate in the ROCA initiative will be considered by the ROCA leadership. Please send a note regarding your interest to Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain, Global Ocean Forum, [bilianacicin-sain@globaloceans.org](mailto:bilianacicin-sain@globaloceans.org)