

Side Event on

Towards a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on Oceans and Seas: Healthy, Productive and Resilient Oceans and Seas—Prosperous and Resilient Peoples and Communities

February 3, 2014, 1:15 PM to 2:30 PM

Trusteeship Council Chamber
United Nations Headquarters

Organized by



Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS)
and Timor-Leste



Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
of UNESCO



Global Ocean Forum

Agenda

Chair and Moderator: H.E. Mr. Robert G. Aisi, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations and Chair of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) to the United Nations

Presentations by Panel: Towards an SDG on Oceans and Seas

- ***The Imperative for a Healthy, Productive and Resilient Oceans and Seas SDG (5 Minutes)***
H.E. Ms Marlene Moses, Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States and Timor Leste
- ***Keeping Track of Ocean Health and Services (5 Minutes)***
Dr. Wendy Watson-Wright, Executive Secretary, IOC/UNESCO

- ***The Centrality of Oceans for Sustainable Development: Civil Society Perspectives on an SDG on Oceans (5 Minutes)***
Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain, President, Global Ocean Forum, and Professor, University of Delaware
- ***Blue Globe-Blue Growth-Blue Goal! (5 Minutes)***
Dr. Arni Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- ***Securing Blue Wealth: The Need for a Special Sustainable Development Goal on Oceans and Seas: Possible Targets and Indicators (5 Minutes)***
Dr. Martin Visbeck, GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research, Kiel, Germany, and International Council of Science (ICSU)

Discussant:

- H.E. Ms Isabelle Picco, Permanent Representative of Monaco to the United Nations

Interactive Discussion



BACKGROUND

Healthy, productive and resilient oceans and seas, supporting human development, poverty eradication and economic growth whilst preserving essential ecological goods and services, is critical to all and therefore a universal agenda. Our rainwater, drinking water, weather, much of our food, and even the oxygen we breathe, are ultimately provided and regulated by the oceans and seas.

The global ocean economic activity is estimated to be between US\$3-6 trillion, contributing to the world economy in many important ways, such as:

- 90 percent of global trade moves by marine transport
- Fisheries and aquaculture supply 4.3 billion people with more than 15 percent of annual consumption of animal protein and provide over 50 million jobs
- Over 30 percent of global oil and gas produced is conducted offshore
- Coastal tourism is the largest market segment in the world economy, comprising 5 percent of the global GDP and 6 to 7 percent of global employment
- The vast diversity of marine biodiversity has provided breakthrough advances in the past few years in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, food production, and aquaculture
- 13 of the world's 20 megacities are along the coast
- Tides, waves, currents, and offshore wind are emerging sources of energy that have significant potential to contribute to low-carbon energy supplies that exist in many coastal areas

Despite increasing efforts at international, regional, national and sub-national levels, the health and well-being of oceans and seas have declined throughout the decades, compromising the many benefits and services that they provide to the global community.

At Rio+20, oceans and seas were among the more substantial sections of the final negotiated outcome document. Nations committed “to protect, and restore, the health, productivity and resilience of oceans (...), and to maintain their biodiversity, enabling their conservation and sustainable use for present and future generations, and to effectively apply an ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach in the management, in accordance with international law, of

activities having an impact on the marine environment, to deliver on all three dimensions of sustainable development.”

Building on the momentum of the Rio+20 Conference, the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) have put forth a proposal for the case of a stand-alone Ocean and Seas SDG to implement the mandate given at Rio+20. These aspirations are shared and supported by the UN, international organisations, private sector, and civil society.

The implementation of an SDG on Oceans and Seas would provide a new impetus for the integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, overcoming deficits of sector-specific goals or approaches, which has been the main approach, thus far, to managing the ocean and seas. Through an SDG on Oceans and Seas, strategies that help eradicate poverty, sustain economic growth, enhance social inclusion, improve human welfare, and create job opportunities, while maintaining the healthy functioning of the oceans and seas, could be implemented.

The Millennium Development Goals did not address oceans and seas in a holistic manner. An SDG on Oceans and Seas would build on MDG achievements by making healthy, productive, and resilient oceans and seas an explicit part of the world's sustainable development agenda.

This side event aims to further dialogue among governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society on approaches to support the proposed SDG, as well as the prominent role that oceans and seas should play in the SDG framework.

For additional information, please contact:

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