



Contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums, are invited to share relevant input and deliberations as to how they address goals and targets from the perspective of “*Ensuring that no one is left behind*”.

Inputs could follow the following template, inspired by the report of the Secretary-General on Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level (A/70/684).

Submissions will be publicly posted online at the United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, at sustainabledevelopment.un.org, as input to the 2016 meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Please send the completed form no later than **16 May 2016** to the Secretariat’s e-mail pietracci@un.org

Submission Form

1. An assessment of the situation regarding the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind” at the global level

The ocean is an integral part of our planet, and is an absolutely essential component of human lives, livelihoods and the environment that sustains us. Use of ocean space and resources has been an essential component of global economic growth and prosperity. Maintaining the quality of life that the ocean has provided to humankind while sustaining the integrity of ocean ecosystems, requires changes in how we view, manage, govern and use ocean resources and coastal areas. Ocean and coastal areas provide many benefits to sustainable development, including both human (social and economic) and environmental (ecosystem services). These include benefits through economic sectors in the coastal nations such as fisheries, energy, tourism, and transport/shipping, as well as ‘non-market’ benefits such as climate regulation, carbon sequestration, habitat and biodiversity, among many others. Sadly, the health of the ocean is in peril and many of these economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits and opportunities may be lost. Scientific evidence shows that the impact of human activities, including over fishing, illegal fishing, industrial and agricultural waste, ocean acidification, and coastal development are seriously affecting the health of our ocean. These factors endanger the very survival of many people living in the LDCs and impede efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The scale and intensification of the stresses on the ocean mean that deferring action will increase costs in the future leading to even greater losses of benefits, with great impacts on livelihood of people. Many traditional economic and consumer values that formerly served society well, when coupled with current rates of population increase and economic growth, are not sustainable. Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, particularly for developing countries. Because each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication, the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be over-emphasized. Coasts and the ocean provide multiple opportunities for addressing poverty, through a range of economic sectors. These sectors have to be part of the solution and engage in the search for a more sustainable pathway.



The implementation of SDG 14 needs to be inclusive, and should be based on an integrated scientific approach and grounded in the best available knowledge. Sustained ocean observations and science are essential to better understand and assess the role and potential value of healthy marine and coastal ecosystems.

2. The identification of gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges:

The Rio+20 outcome document and SDG 14 recognizes the importance of capacity development and transfer of marine technology by emphasizing the need for the promotion of international cooperation in marine scientific research to implement UNCLOS and other relevant international agreements in order to benefit from the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas. There is however a recognition that our knowledge of the ocean is sparse and many developing nations still lack the basic scientific infrastructures, human skills and technological advancement needed so that they can derive benefits from the ocean in a sustainable way. Global intergovernmental cooperation is a 'must' to fill knowledge gaps and to raise the capacity of developing nations, in particular LDCs and SIDS.

To provide technology needed to reach the sustainable development targets, knowing the actual demands and disparity in capacity is indispensable. The Global Ocean Science Report (GOSR) currently under preparation and to be published under the auspices of IOC-UNESCO, will assist local and national governments, academic and research institutions, as well as international organizations and donors, in making informed decisions, e.g. on future research investment. It will summarize information about the status of ocean research, investment in research infrastructure and human capacity, as well as potential gaps in marine sciences programmes in need of further investments. It is envisaged to provide an overview on nations' (i) investments, (ii) resources, and (iii) scientific productivity in Ocean Science. It will provide a tool for mapping and evaluating the human and institutional capacity of Member States in terms of marine research, observations and data/information management, as well as a global overview of the main fields of research interest, technological developments, capacity building needs and overall trends.

In brief, the GOSR will inform of where the science capacity exists to address the present environmental challenges. The results presented in the publication will create baselines needed to tailor actions as required in the agenda 2030, in particular SDG 14.a. Having the structure of the GOSR build around the definition of sustainable development will facilitate the application of new findings.

3. Valuable lessons learned on ensuring that no one is left behind:

Vulnerability to climate change and ocean-related disasters, on the coast and inland, can be reduced through sustainable development practices leading to increased resiliency, and the development of effective early warning systems including the ocean on multiple timescales.

Integrated ecosystem approaches and diversification of livelihoods and enterprise can improve sustainable development in all three pillars by providing the benefits of increased productivity and resilience of living marine resources (environmental pillar), by reducing the vulnerability of the coastal poor (social pillar) and increased incomes (economic pillar).

During the past 10 years, the evolution of marine spatial planning (MSP) and ocean zoning has become a crucial step in making ecosystem-based, sea use management a reality. The idea was



initially stimulated by international and national interest in developing marine protected areas, e.g., the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. More recent attention has been placed on managing the multiple use of marine space, especially in areas where conflicts among users and the environment are already clear, e.g., in the North Sea. Even more recent concern has focused on the need to conserve nature, especially ecologically and biologically sensitive areas, in the context of multi-use planning of ocean space.

Private sector use of the ocean is expanding rapidly in its volume and kinds of activities, with increasing impacts on the marine environment at a cumulative global scale. User conflicts among industries and with other stakeholders are increasing. As the primary user of the ocean, industry is well placed to develop and implement solutions in response to society's increasing demands that marine ecosystem use is sustainable and impacts are reduced. Ocean industries have numerous serious impacts on the marine environment and most of them (like pollution or habitat loss) are multi-sectoral. Yet, ocean industries also have a huge potential to collect oceanographic and atmospheric data that contribute to better modelling and predicting ocean conditions, extreme weather events and climate change that impact economies and livelihoods. Developing public-private partnerships could be a good way to find solutions to impacts and improving ocean data. Collaboration between public and private sectors could catalyze, accelerate and strengthen the nascent private sector interaction on ocean sustainability.

4. Emerging issues likely to affect the realization of this principle:

Human development activities are still largely concentrated in coastal areas at the intersections between the terrestrial and marine environments and sustainability efforts are logically concentrated there but they continue to expand into increasingly remote marine environments, particularly areas beyond national jurisdiction. These areas, representing 64% of the Earth's surface area and 95% of the ocean's volume, are governed as a global commons subject to only minimum international regulation. UN member states started this year to begin negotiating a treaty to safeguard ocean biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, also known as the high seas.

Negotiations shall address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources. Questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology will be part of the discussion.

SDG 14 implementation must take these unique issues of scale duly into account if it is to address the ocean holistically. Because only a handful of developed nations have the capacity to collect ocean data in the high seas, it will be essential that adequate global or regional mechanism are put in place to ensure access to all member states to marine biodiversity data in all ocean basins, including areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Thus there is a need for a mechanism for international cooperation in marine scientific research, coordination in global ocean observation, and development of standards, manual and guidelines and codes of conduct in marine scientific research and data sharing protocols.



5. Areas where political guidance by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is required:

Renewed efforts to develop national ocean policies should be considered with an emphasis on science and research in wide consultation with civil society and other user groups, including the private sector, to inform policy decisions, and strengthen national ocean policies where they already exist, which places emphasis on multi-level governance at national, local and community levels with appropriate support of relevant regional and global institutions, including IOC of UNESCO.

6. Policy recommendations on ways to accelerate progress for those at risk of being left behind:

Improved coordination mechanisms at appropriately high levels within national authorities are needed to elevate science-based policy discourses on oceans governance and marine resources management. In this regard, nations should consider the establishment of national Ministries of Oceans/Marine Resources that place oceans at the center of their national development policies. Established Ministries should adopt an integrated approach to the management of human activities affecting the oceans and their resources and consider fisheries, agriculture, watershed and coastal management, forests, and biodiversity conservation. They should recognize the value that marine science and technology can contribute towards better informed decision making on the broad range of oceans and marine resources issues, including the effective designation of managed and protected areas, enhanced integrated coastal management, improved ocean zoning, improved sustainable marine resources management, improved tourism policies and capitalizing on the holistic “ridge to reef” approach.

Specific efforts should be targeted to SIDS in order to assist them to strengthen their national, sub-regional and regional enabling environment through Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policy framework and institutional mechanisms that not only deploy modern marine STI but also mainstream traditional marine technologies for the socio-economic and inclusive development of SIDS. Such assistance could be provided through a UN body such as the IOC.