



Ocean Panel 2024 Annual Leaders' Communiqué

1. We, the members of the Ocean Panel, are working collectively to protect the ocean's health, unlock economic opportunities and empower communities.
2. The health of the ocean is in a state of emergency and urgent action is needed to safeguard the planet and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals¹. Our shared vision is to address these challenges through building a sustainable ocean economy where effective protection, efficient production, and equitable prosperity go hand in hand.
3. Today marks the publication of our second Progress Report², which assesses our individual and collective efforts towards our *Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy Agenda*³. Good progress has been made since the inception of our cooperation, but accelerated and scaled-up action is required to realise our 2030 goals.
4. We stand steadfast in our commitment to implement our *Transformations Agenda*, and pledge to accelerate our implementation as set forth in this statement.

Our Collective Priorities & Towards the 2025 UN Ocean Conference

Implementing Our Commitments

5. At the heart of our agenda is the commitment to **sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area** under national jurisdiction, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans⁴.
6. We note the active preparations underway across our membership in the development of Sustainable Ocean Plans, including collaboration through joint learning and knowledge sharing with the critical support of the Ocean Action 2030 coalition⁵.

Securing Multilateral Outcomes

7. We will work to ensure a successful third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC), co-hosted by France and Costa Rica in Nice, June 2025. We emphasise the importance of the three special events in spotlighting key issues and topics for a sustainable ocean economy: the Blue Economy and Finance Forum, the One Ocean Science Congress, and the Ocean Rise and Resilience Summit.
8. We will work to mobilise action on **multilateral processes**, towards timely commencement and effective implementation, as appropriate, and encourage others to do so, including by:
 - Committing to pursue the swift ratification, approval, acceptance or accession of the new Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (known as the **BBNJ Agreement**). We acknowledge the proposal of Chile, a member of this Panel, to host the Secretariat of this new Agreement.

¹ UN, 2023. [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition](#)

² Ocean Panel, 2024. [Ocean Panel Progress Report 2024](#)

³ Ocean Panel, 2020. [Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy](#)

⁴ By end of 2025, or for member countries who joined the Panel since 2020, a commitment of delivery within five years of joining.

⁵ An Action Group of the Ocean Panel: [Ocean Action 2030](#)



- Strengthening the implementation of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) **Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (PSMA)**, and to advance solutions towards sustainable fisheries.
 - Championing the development of strong international frameworks, instruments, and guidance to sustainably manage fish stocks and to conserve marine ecosystems, including through regional fisheries management organisations and the FAO's Committee on Fisheries.
 - Completing in 2024 the negotiations for an ambitious **international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution**, including in the marine environment, to end additional plastic pollution based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastic.
9. We encourage all UN Member States to commit to develop an ambitious *Nice Ocean Action Plan*⁶, and to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 through state action and the mobilisation of all relevant actors and stakeholders.

Financing a Sustainable Ocean Economy

10. We reiterate our goal that by 2030 sustainable ocean finance is accessible for all and drives ecologically sustainable and socially equitable economic growth. We will work to direct, as appropriate, public and private sector financing and development assistance to investments in the sustainable ocean economy, including for the development and implementation of Sustainable Ocean Plans.
11. We will collectively take forward opportunities to improve access to ocean finance, catalyse, de-risk and scale sustainable ocean finance and investments, recognising that financing a sustainable ocean economy will require joint efforts and partnerships across the public and private sector.

Ocean Science and Partnerships for Ocean Action

12. We will continue to work with our Expert Group, Action Groups, and in partnership to build and share knowledge, translating science into policy action. We will strengthen partnerships with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, including across the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and new Ocean Decade Programmes on sustainable ocean planning and management, and on sustainable ocean management in Africa⁷.
13. We will continue to work to ensure that regulations for seabed mineral mining – under development by the International Seabed Authority – provide effective protection of marine environments by applying a precautionary and ecosystem-based approach, using science-based and transparent management, and ensuring effective compliance with a robust inspection mechanism. We welcome initiatives to obtain further scientific knowledge to ensure that any activity related to seabed minerals is informed by science and ecologically sustainable.

⁶ UN, 2023. [Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2023](#)

⁷ UN Ocean Decade Conference, 2024. [The Barcelona Statement](#)

Strengthening Ocean-based Climate and Nature Positive Actions

14. We have long championed the importance of ambitious climate action for the health of the ocean and for the livelihoods and economies that depend on it, and note with concern that ocean warming is now happening at an unprecedented pace and accelerating rate, with consequence to rising sea levels, alterations in ocean currents and dramatic changes in marine ecosystems⁸.
15. We emphasise that ocean-based climate action is a key part of the solution. We note that ocean-based climate solutions that are ready to implement now could deliver up to 35% of the global emission reductions needed in line with keeping a limit of 1.5°Celsius temperature rise within reach⁹.
16. We highlight the importance of nature positive actions and reiterate our commitment towards halting and reversing marine and coastal biodiversity loss, restoring degraded ecosystems, and effectively conserving and managing at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030, in line with the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
17. To this end, we will enhance the integration of ocean-based action within our national climate and biodiversity strategies, plans and policies, where appropriate, such as the updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) ahead of CBD COP16, and in our next nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.

Enhancing Ocean Health, Human Health, Equity and Livelihoods

18. Our latest commissioned report demonstrates that a healthy ocean is imperative to human health, from sourcing critical medicines to providing space for solace, physical activity and recreation¹⁰.
19. We emphasise the critical role of sustainable ocean food to achieving food and nutrition security and as a low-carbon source for equitable and resilient global food systems. We reiterate our commitment to deploy available solutions for sustainable fisheries, including small-scale fisheries, and sustainable aquaculture management, to support jobs, livelihoods and wellbeing.
20. We strive to place people and just transitions at the centre of our endeavours, enabling the enjoyment of human rights, facilitating the equitable distribution of ocean wealth and ensuring equality of opportunity for all. We commit to creating inclusive ocean governance by incorporating Indigenous Knowledge and local community knowledge and interests, particularly those of women and youth, in planning and decision-making processes.

Looking Ahead

21. Looking ahead, we are resolute in our commitment to deliver on our *Transformations Agenda* over 2026-2030 and towards its global implementation, through catalysing finance, building capacity and knowledge, and working in partnership.
22. We call on all coastal and ocean states to join us in the commitment to 100% sustainable ocean management, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans, and in partnership through the 100% Alliance¹¹.

⁸ IOC-UNESCO, 2024. [State of the Ocean Report](#)

⁹ Hoegh-Guldberg, O., Northrop, E. et al. 2023. [The ocean as a solution to climate change: Updated opportunities for action.](#)

¹⁰ Fleming, L.E., P. J. Landrigan et al. 2024. [How can a healthy ocean improve human health and enhance wellbeing on a rapidly changing planet?](#)

¹¹ 100% Alliance is led by the government of France in partnership with the Ocean Panel and coordinated by WRI: [100% Alliance](#)