



From Lisbon to Nice: Implementing SDG 14 with the Communities of Ocean Action

November 14-15 2023

Oakwood Premier Hotel, Incheon, Republic of Korea

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

The 2022 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (The 2022 UN Ocean Conference) co-hosted by Kenya and Portugal is another significant milestone of global ocean action since the first UN Ocean Conference in 2017. It successfully scaled up ocean action based on science and innovation and facilitated new partnerships and solutions for the implementation of SDG14. Over 700 voluntary commitments (VC) for concrete action to advance implementation of SDG 14 were made before and during the Conference by Member States, the UN system, and an array of stakeholders including civil society, the private sector and academia. Billions of dollars were pledged by philanthropic organizations and regional development banks to address the deterioration of ocean health and sustainable use of marine resources. To date, there are 2786 ocean VCs in the online registry (SDG Actions Platform <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships>) managed by UNDESA, making SDG14 the most registered goal among the 17 SDGs.

However, to get the SDG14 implementation back on track, it is of paramount importance to effectively translate the commitments made into tangible actions. In this regard, the Communities of Ocean Action (COAs), which were established following the 2017 UN Ocean Conference, have a vital role to play in facilitating the implementation of VCs. Deeper collaboration is needed among COAs and relevant partners to effectively identify key challenges and develop innovative approaches to support the implementation, such as connecting available resources with commendable initiatives. This collaborative effort will strengthen the collective resolve to overcome obstacles and maximize the positive outcomes of the ocean commitments, paving the way to the 3rd UN Ocean Conference to be held in June 2025 in Nice cohosted by France and Costa Rica.

The 2022 Conference also adopted an intergovernmentally negotiated political declaration titled “Our Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility” which recognized the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and plastic waste on ocean health, ocean based economy and coastal communities. It also called for, among others, strengthened cooperation in data collection and dissemination and making data widely accessible through open access databases in particular for developing countries. To this end, UNDESA in collaboration with a consultant prepared a Mapping Report on Existing Ocean Databases analyzing available and accessible databases related to each SDG14 target.

This workshop will focus on the follow-up of these two key outcomes of 2022 UN Ocean Conference, to share the key findings of the ocean database report and to have an in-depth discussion with the COAs and representatives of commitment holders on how to implement the VCs registered at Lisbon Conference and mobilize more impactful commitments for the 2025 Nice Conference.



OBJECTIVES

- To bring government representatives/policy makers/practitioners from developing countries to enhance their capacity of ocean data access and collection including traditional knowledge, data sharing and utilization in their decision making and to better monitor and measure the progress of implementation of SDG14.
- To bring together the focal points of the nine Communities of Ocean Action and some key holders of Ocean Commitments to assess the voluntary commitments of the 2022 Conference and identify how to support the implementation of those VCs particularly in developing countries.
- To get an update on the implementation of the VCs by each COA by stock-taking of progress and identify gaps and challenges as well as to share best practice and lessons.
- Maintain the momentum on ocean action ahead of the upcoming 3rd UNOC in 2025 and brainstorm innovative ways to mobilize more commitments of high impacts.

FORMAT

The 2-day workshop will have an high-level opening session on Day 1 which will include remarks from Mr. Li Junhua, Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, representative from the co-hosts of the 2022 UN Ocean Conference, Portugal/ Kenya; the Special Envoy for the Ocean, H.E. Ambassador Peter Thomson; senior officials from ROK as well as representative of COAs. The open session will be followed by a presentation on the Ocean database mapping report and interactive dialogues and Q&A. Day 2 will feature panel discussions, update of the work on each COAs by respective co-focal points and a closing session.