

# SUMMARY OF THE OCEAN ACTION EVENTS AT COP27



**Note:** The UN Climate Change High-level Champions, Global Climate Action Agenda for Ocean & Coastal Zones, the Ocean & Climate Platform, together with partners are organising the Ocean Action Events Package to scale-up ocean-based climate action during COP27: the Ocean Futures Lab, the Ocean Action Day and two Implementation Labs on Blue Carbon Ecosystems and Green-Gray Infrastructures.



United Nations  
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# OCEAN FUTURES LAB

## THINKING OUTSIDE THE SHELL: TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE BLUE FUTURE WE NEED

The **Ocean Futures Lab** took place on 8 November, from 8.30 to 10.00 AM in the Nature Pavilion. The event focused on two particular sectors: **ocean renewable energy and sustainable aquatic food production**. Throughout the discussions, panelists demonstrated through concrete examples how the development of both are essential to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.



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## HIGH-LEVEL OPENING

The event was opened by **Victor Gustaaf Manoppo, Director General of Marine Spatial Planning, Republic of Indonesia** who recalled his Government's commitment to protect the ocean and marine resources, and presented their 5 'blue economic strategies' amongst which are expanding conservation areas and establishing an Ocean programme. In his speech, **Ambassador Peter Thomson, the UN Secretary General Special Envoy for the Ocean**, insisted on the need for systemic change which requires bold ideas and actions, and for strengthened finance in support of the blue economy.

**'We must act responsibly because the fate of our future depends on our ability to protect the ocean'**

Victor Gustaaf Manoppo, Director General of Marine Spatial Planning, Republic of Indonesia

## PANEL 1 - SUSTAINABLE AQUATIC FOOD PRODUCTION

Bringing together representatives from **the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Rare and the SeaBOS Initiative**, the first panel offered an **in-depth look at the state and the future of aquatic food systems**. Moderator **Erik Giercksky, UN Global Compact**, oriented the discussions around key enablers for the sustainable development of such systems, to tap into their potential to answer the food crisis. Indeed, panelists demonstrated how **developing sustainable aquatic food systems is about food security**, these products being **essential to our health and future** as a source of nutrients and proteins, but also **a source of jobs, essential to the livelihoods and resilience of coastal communities**. **Maria**

**Helena Semedo, Deputy Director General of the FAO**, and **Rocky Tirona, Vice President Fish Forever, Rare** shared their insights on key enablers to achieve this target and support small-scale fisheries, including **a call for more aquaculture licences, strengthened inclusion of coastal communities into decision-making and providing them the science and information** they need to manage their own resources. **Wenche Grønbrekk, Director of Strategy, Partnerships and External Relations of the SeaBOS Initiative**, highlighted that as much as innovation and sustainability are important, **policy** is also crucial for a proper management of water resources.



From left to right: Erik Giercksky (UN Global Compact), Maria Helena Semedo (FAO), Rocky Tirona (Rare) and Wenche Grønbrekk (SeaBOS). © OCP

## VOICES ACROSS GENERATIONS: THINKING OUTSIDE THE SHELL

An intergenerational dialogue was held between *environmental veteran Rémi Parmentier, Director of the Varda Group* and *youth representative Siddharth Shekhar Yadav, UNFCCC Climate Champions Ocean Youth Fellow* to think outside of the shell. They reflected on lessons learned from past experiences, and how those can inspire the action of younger generations to fight for a world in which the ocean is thriving. Rémi Parmentier, who played a major role in sending harpoons to where they belong - museums, asked his counterpart what he would want to see in museums. The answer was straightforward: the fossil fuel industry. This dialogue was an overall call for ambition.



From left to right: Siddharth Shekhar Yadav (HLC Champions team), Loreley Picourt (Ocean & Climate Platform) and Rémi Parmentier (Varda Group) ©OCP



## PANEL 2 - OCEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY



From left to right: Anna-Marie Laura (Ocean Conservancy), Amjad Abdullah (IRENA) and Benjamin Sykes (Orsted). ©OCP

The Ocean Futures Lab showcased that a future where ocean renewable energy is broadly developed is within reach, by **putting forth existing key opportunities to harness the potential of the ocean as a source of clean energy.** Moderator Anna-Marie Laura, Director of International Government Relations, Ocean Conservancy, and representatives from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and Ørsted pointed out that the production of offshore wind, for example, has been exponential over the years but still, further efforts must be

made. Amjad Abdulla, Head of Partnership at IRENA, insisted on the **necessity of linking the energy sector to others such as tourism**, which plays a major role in the economies of Small Islands Developing States. Benjamin Sykes, Head of Environment, Consenting & External Affairs at Ørsted, noted that **technology and cost are not the main challenges anymore - deployment is.** It needs to be **sustainable, biodiversity-positive and integrated in marine spatial planning.** To this end, the **development of international regulatory frameworks**, common to the industries of the sector, was vowed essential. The discussion also addressed the **role of financial institutions in scaling up and derisking investments to successfully support the sector.**

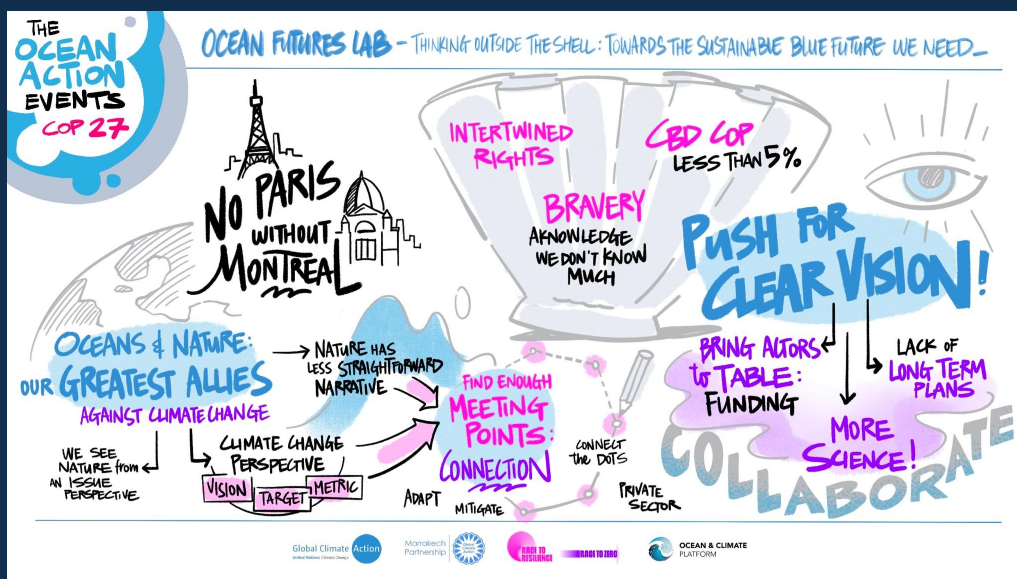
## CLOSING SEGMENT - NO PARIS WITHOUT MONTREAL

**'Ocean and nature are our greatest ally in our action to mitigate and adapt to climate change'**

Razan Al Mubarak, President, IUCN

The Ocean Futures Lab closed with Razan Al Mubarak, President of the IUCN and Manuel Pulgar Vidal, Global leader of Climate & Energy at the WWF discussing **connections between the climate (UNFCCC) and biodiversity (CBD) regimes.** They both stressed the need for a common vision and narrative -

especially in a context where the nature narrative is less straightforward than the climate narrative (1.5°C). They also mentioned opportunities to concretely build bridges among the two conventions, including the implementation of **coastal and marine nature-based solutions** and the **alignment of fundings for climate and nature.** Manuel Pulgar Vidal invited COP27 participants to also attend CBD COP15 and **bring the climate energy and visibility** to the biodiversity COP. Razan Al Mubarak also highlighted the **role that non-state actors can play** in driving ambition and action for global biodiversity negotiations and policies.





# OCEAN ACTION DAY

## OCEAN FOR CLIMATE: IMPLEMENTING OCEAN-BASED CLIMATE ACTION TO BUILD COASTAL ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

The **Ocean Action Day** took place on 16 November, from 10.00 AM to 12.00 PM in the Climate Action Zone. The event focused on the key enablers to **scale-up coastal adaptation and resilience, and took a deep dive into financing ocean and coastal action**. Throughout the discussions, panelists presented concrete ocean-based solutions based on lessons learned on the ground and the latest science. They assessed existing ocean and climate action, and identified gaps that must be addressed to achieve a net-zero, nature-positive future, while enhancing adaptation and resilience-building of ecosystems and coastal communities.



## HIGH-LEVEL OPENING

**H.E. Ralph Regenvanu, Minister of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and Disaster Risk Management, Republic of Vanuatu**, opened the Ocean Action Day by underscoring the central role of the ocean as the world's greatest carbon sink. Large ocean state, he insisted on the dependance of his country on ocean resources, and resulting vulnerability to climate change impacts. He therefore called for greater ambition to strengthen ocean-based action, encouraging countries to become ocean champions to keep the 1.5°C target alive.

**“We have to maintain that capacity of the ocean to be our greatest carbon sink to reduce emissions, while we seek to reduce emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change that are already here.”**

*H.E. Ralph Regenvanu,  
Minister of Climate Change Adaptation,  
Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy,  
Environment and Disaster Risk  
Management, Republic of Vanuatu*

**Prof Dr Tarek A. Temraz, Advisor to the Ministry of Environment, Arab Republic of Egypt**, also insisted our global dependance to the ocean, due to the many services it provides. He emphasised the importance of connectivity, noting that there is only one ocean, one planet. He identified the elimination of scientific barriers and the exchange of ocean knowledge as priorities to build and increase the resilience of marine ecosystems.

## PANEL 1 - SCALING-UP COASTAL ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE



From left to right: Sylvie Goyet (Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation), Alexis Grosskopf (OceanHub Africa), Dr Arthur Tuda (WIOMSA), Seydina Issa Laye Sambe (Mayor of Yoff) and Dr Sarah Cooley (IPCC). ©IISD

Bringing together representatives from the **IPCC, WIOMSA, OceanHub Africa and the municipality of Yoff**, the first panel addressed scaling-up coastal adaptation and resilience through diverse options. Moderator **Sylvie Goyet, Advisor to the CEO and Vice President, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation**, set the scene with the obstacles to effective adaptation of coastal areas, as well as opportunities and key enablers to overcome them. Although coming from diverse backgrounds, panelists agreed on key enablers to scale up coastal adaptation and resilience, including **capacity building, inclusive processes, increased cooperation at all levels and good governance**.

The event purposely focused on the African continent to highlight its role as an innovation hub. In that regard, **Alexis Grosskopf, CEO at OceanHub Africa**, stressed the need to **de-risk investments and to support entrepreneurship in the Global South**, to provide opportunities for businesses to grow in developing countries. **Seydina Issa Laye Sambe, Mayor of Yoff** insisted on the importance to **include local communities in the process** and **Dr Sarah Cooley, Coordinating Lead Author, AR6 Working Group II, IPCC**, urged to focus on building trust between stakeholders to work together on the solutions. From a scientific perspective, **Dr Arthur Tuda, Executive Secretary at WIOMSA**, stood firm on the need to bridge the knowledge gap.



## PANEL 2 - FINANCING OCEAN AND COASTAL ACTION

The second panel addressed the **role of financial institutions in scaling up ocean and coastal action** and took a deep-dive into the tools being developed to support the blue economy. The discussion also provided an opportunity to take stock of the needs to increase investments in blue finance. Moderator **Joywin Mathew, Partner at DLA Piper**, invited the panelists to provide concrete examples of initiatives implemented across sectors to finance ocean and coastal action. **Beatriz Granziera,**



From left to right: Arghya Sinha Roy (ADB), Julia Manning (EBRD) and Beatriz Granziera (TNC). ©IISD

**International Climate Policy Advisor at The Nature Conservancy**, presented the **Blue Bonds Program**, which contributes to protect marine ecosystems and brings numerous **co-benefits**, including making local communities more resilient. She stressed that to effectively scale-up blue finance, **barriers between what's happening in the Pavilions of COPs and in the negotiations rooms must be broken down**. **Julia Manning, Associate Director to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development**, and **Arghya Sinha Roy, Principal Climate Change Specialist, Climate Adaptation, Asian Development Bank**, showcased successful partnerships and investments projects supporting the blue economy. They called for **increased capacity raising, cooperation and partnerships** between public and private sectors.

## WRAP-UP SESSION: KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THE OCEAN AT COP27

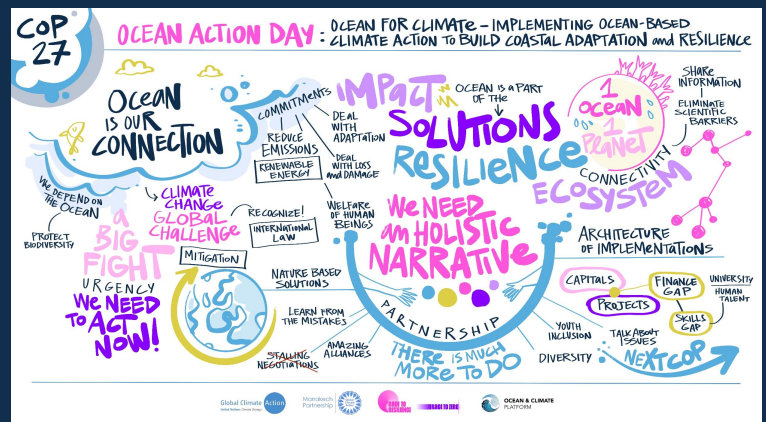


From left to right: Nigel Topping (HLC), Minna Epps (IUCN), Mark Haver (SOA). ©IISD

**Nigel Topping, High-Level Climate Champion of COP 26, Presidency of the United Kingdom** moderated the wrap-up session, which explored some of the **highlights and lessons learned from COP27** before COP15 and to build COP28. **Minna Epps, Director of Global Marine and Polar Programme, IUCN** called for greater ambition, accelerating implementation and making sure that national commitments are aligned and the national processes. **Mark Haver, Global Policy Advisor & Youth Representative, Sustainable Ocean Alliance** emphasised the need for capacity building in order to make sure youth take part in the decision making processes.

## CLOSING REMARKS

The Ocean Action Day closed with **Barkha Mossaë, Blue Economy Advisor, African Union Commission**, reminding how the ocean is part of the solution for climate action. With a specific focus on the African continent, she urged to **build capacity and resilience for communities, and develop technologies** in order to address climate change.



# IMPLEMENTATION LAB

## BUILDING RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE ALONG THE COAST

The **Implementation Lab on Building resilient infrastructure along the coast** took place on 16 November, from 1.00 to 2.30 PM in the Climate Action Zone and gathered two roundtable discussions. The first panel addressed **nature-based solutions such as green and hybrid infrastructures to bring affordable and eco-friendly solutions**, while the second focused on the **financial tools and innovative policies to scale-up and build resilient coastal infrastructures**.



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## OPENING REMARKS

The event was opened by **Marcia Toledo, Resilience Lead for the UN Climate Champions**, who presented the Sharm el Sheikh Adaptation Agenda to accelerate action and adaptation across 5 different systems - namely food, water, ocean and coastal zones, and human settlements. She presented the lab as a way to **address the opportunities to accelerate adaptation and increase resilience on ocean and coastal ecosystems.**



Marcia Toledo (UN Climate Champions).  
©UNFCCC webcast

## FOCUS: THE SHENZHEN SPONGE CITY CASE

**Mr. Feng Su, Deputy Head of Yantian District of Shenzhen Municipal Government**, provided an in-depth study of the Shenzhen Sponge City in China. He described the project as a **comprehensive system, which protects nature and combines urban infrastructure construction.** The structure links up green networks, forms a large sponge to increase the city's resilience, and **improves its defense against major disasters, allowing adaptability and quick recovery.**

## PANEL 1 - INCORPORATING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN BUILDING GREEN AND HYBRID INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESILIENT COASTS



From left to right: Le Ge (TNC), Hong Miao (WRI).  
©UNFCCC webcast

The first panel was moderated by **Xi Liang, Professor in Sustainable Construction and Infrastructure Transition, University College London.** He invited the panelists to discuss best practices in developing climate resilience and coastal infrastructure. Thinking from a broader design perspective, **Robert Kay's Americas Climate and Sustainability Services Lead, Arup**, explained that it is crucial to focus on the long-term performance of a project, ensuring benefits after an intervention. **Le Ge, Climate Change and Energy Director, The Nature Conservancy China**,

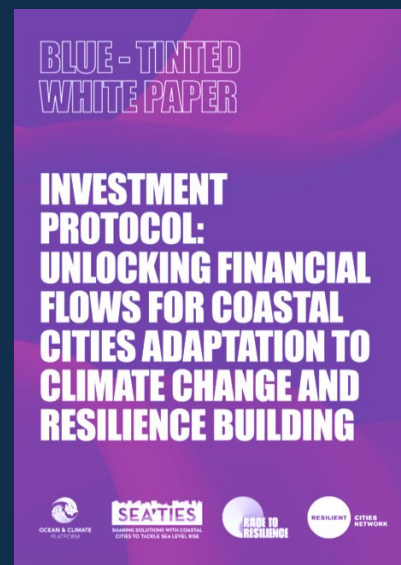
highlighted the power of nature to tackle climate change. Implementing nature-based solutions (NbS) that can co-benefit climate mitigation, adaptation and human well-being embody the best standard to develop climate resilient infrastructure. **Kate Strachan, Climate Change Adaptation Resilience Manager, ICLEI Africa**, stressed that **future uncertainty, the ever-growing climate change risks**, as well as the **diversity of stakeholders** contribute to hinder the process of creating resilient coastal cities infrastructure. Highlighting the need to **think in the long-term**, she urged organisations and people to **work with cities and develop projects addressing climate change and attract finance.** **Hong Miao, Sustainable Investment Program Director, WRI**, evoked the relations between **institutional and local governance of cities.** She pointed out the need to **coordinate and build on this structured system** to scale-up the broad portfolio of investments existing in that area and increase resilience infrastructure in coastal China.

***“Cities have relied on heavy infrastructures for a long time, it is now time to change that and start integrating NbS into our policies and plans, into our building guidelines as we move forward.”***

*Kate Strachan, Climate Change Adaptation Resilience Manager, ICLEI Africa*

## FOCUS: THE COASTAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROTOCOL RESEARCH FINDINGS

Moderator **Marcia Toledo** introduced **Theophile Bongarts**, **Sea'ties Project Manager, Ocean & Climate Platform**, who presented the coastal infrastructure investment protocol research findings. The aim of this document is to **enable coastal cities to better attract finance, and implement more sustainable and innovative solutions in coastal cities' projects**. Together with representatives of the ocean community and cities, this initiative provided room for discussion for coastal cities, public, private and the key actors of the blue economy to work together.



## PANEL 2 - INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO ATTRACT INVESTMENT FOR COASTAL CITIES ADAPTATION

**Dr. Folayinka Dania, Chief Resilience Officer, Lagos**, welcomed the idea of an investment protocol, yet pointed out the need for a **more detailed approach to access the funds**. She urged to **take into account the estimated damage costs of doing nothing**. **Sean Kidney, CEO, Climate Bonds Initiative**, mentioned the appreciation of risk and the development of a **climate resilience taxonomy** to address coastal cities needs. **Ruth Boumphrey, CEO, LR Foundation**, stressed the need to build into our **financing, using more general approaches, standards with long term horizons**. This economy has to involve the private sector and the informal workers, and **invest in adaptive and nature-positive engineering**, mostly through education. **Marine de Bazelaire, Group Advisor on Natural Capital, HSBC**, underscored the need for **financial institutions to have a more regular framework**. It is crucial they know what to finance and what the right trajectory is, to enable resilience of coastal areas over the long term.

*“The ocean is the world biggest employer”*

*Ruth Boumphrey, CEO, LR Foundation*

## CLOSING REMARKS

**Rob Braun, Director, Green-Gray Infrastructure/Nature-based Solutions, Conservation International**, closed the event noting numerous gaps in the resilient coastal infrastructure projects, yet pointed out the **many tools available** to transform the construction industry and accelerate investments for coastal cities adaptation.

*“Green-gray is the idea that you take ecosystem restoration coupled with engineer features to optimize your resilience benefit.”*

*Rob Braun, Director, Green-Gray Infrastructure/Nature-based Solutions, Conservation International*



# IMPLEMENTATION LAB

## BLUE CARBON ECOSYSTEMS

The **Blue Carbon Implementation Lab** took place on 16 November, from 3.00 to 4.30 PM in the Climate Action Zone. The event focused on the **efforts achieved to implement nature-based solutions** (NbS) for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Blue Carbon Implementation Lab further addressed **opportunities to scale-up the potential of blue carbon, including through the development of innovative financial instruments.**



## OPENING REMARKS

The event was opened and moderated by **Emily Pidgeon, Vice President of Ocean Science and Innovation, Conservation International**, who underscored the need to **restore, conserve, and manage blue carbon ecosystems**, such as mangrove forests, tidal marshes and seagrass meadows. **Marcia Toledo, Resilience Lead for the UN Climate Champions**, provided high-level opening remarks in which she explained how the launch of the Sharm El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda will provide **ground for state and non-state actors to build innovative solutions**.

## ON FINANCE

The first panel focused on boosting finance for blue carbon ecosystems. **Dan Crockett, Blue Marine Foundation**, highlighted the need for **strengthening discussions between stakeholder groups, bringing governments on board, and enhancing transparency**. **Lisa Schindler-Murray, Rare**, welcomed the Mangrove Breakthrough initiative's financial support to restore mangrove forests, yet pointed out the **fragmentation of many blue carbon projects**. She further mentioned the idea of a **mix between public, private, and market-based financing**. **Chip Cunliffe, ORRAA**, called for **de-risking investments** in preserving and restoring blue carbon, as well as **gathering data to identify blue carbon sites**.

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS



From left to right: Lisa Schindler-Murray (Rare), Dan Crockett (Blue Marine Foundation). ©IISD

## ON ACHIEVING HIGH-QUALITY BLUE CARBON OUTCOMES



Whitney Johnston (Salesforce). ©IISD

**Whitney Johnston, Salesforce**, showcased some principles of quality blue carbon markets and solutions (e.g. people's empowerment) developed through a stakeholder engagement process. She called for **building trust among local communities and organizations by strengthening established trust**. In order to map baseline stocks of blue carbon, **Maxine Burkett, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State, US**, stressed that **blue carbon projects require more data and funding to achieve climate mitigation, adaptation and bring benefits to local communities**. **Carlos Correa, CI, and**

**former Minister of Environment of Colombia**, highlighted the **long-term benefits provided by blue carbon projects to coastal communities**, and presented a coastal project in Colombia which contributed to build local trust and engagement.



## ON BLUE CARBON IN NDCS

Participants discussed countries' efforts to include blue carbon ecosystems in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). **John F. Kannah, In-Country NDC Facilitator, Liberia**, announced Liberia's commitment to include blue carbon in its NDC, and placed the **need to distinguish green and blue carbon** as a priority. In addition, **Victoria Alis, Wangari Maathai Foundation** presented Seychelles' objective to achieve 100% mangroves protection, and seagrass meadows preservation, and mentioned the need for a **clear definition of the word "protection"**.



From left to right: Victoria Alis (Maathai Foundation), John F. Kannah (In-Country NDC Facilitator, Liberia). ©IISD

**Jerker Tamelander, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**, underscored the current **lack of reference to blue carbon in NDCs**, as well as **capacity and knowledge gaps in relation to strategic planning processes**.

## ON ON-THE-GROUND IMPLEMENTATION



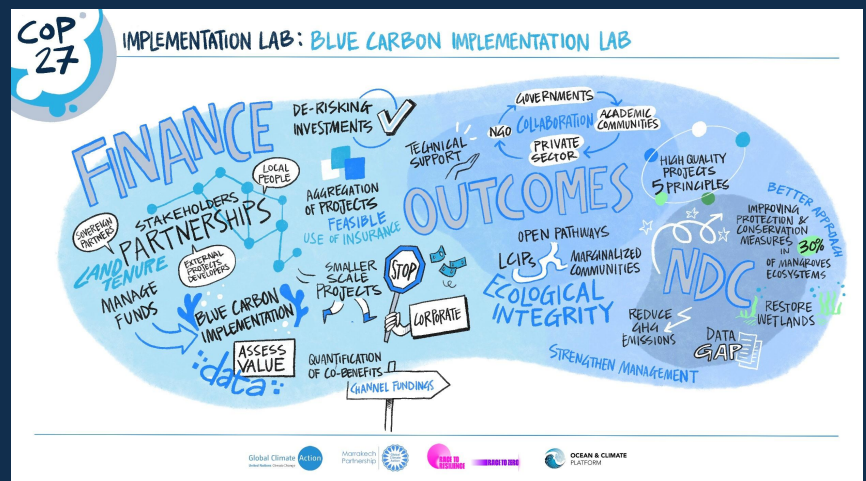
Ailars David (SOA, Tanzania). ©IISD

During the final roundtable discussion, **Ailars David, SOA Tanzania**, stressed that on-the-ground implementation requires local communities, scientists, and other stakeholders being brought to the table together. He further mentioned the importance to **acknowledge the positive impacts that blue carbon projects can have on people's livelihoods and well-being**.

**Julie Mulonga, Wetlands International**, emphasised the need to **fund effective projects** and **called for breaking down barriers to push "connective action" on blue carbon**.

## CLOSING REMARKS

**Nigel Topping, UK COP 26 High-level Climate Champion**, exhorted participants to **learn from each other to achieve common goals**. By **mobilising and transferring the blue carbon skill sets** needed for implementation, he believes we can bridge the implementation gap.



# OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION

## OCEAN FUTURES LAB

- The **IISD** article: [here](#)
- The **IISD** Twitter thread: [here](#)
- The **OCP** Twitter thread: [here](#)



## OCEAN ACTION DAY



- The **IISD** article: [here](#)
- The **IISD** Twitter thread: [here](#)
- The **OCP** Twitter thread: [here](#)
- The **OCP** LinkedIn post: [here](#)
- The **UNFCCC** webcast: [here](#)

## INFRASTRUCTURES LAB

- The **OCP** Twitter thread: [here](#)
- The **UNFCCC** webcast: [here](#)



## BLUE CARBON LAB



- The **IISD** article: [here](#)
- The **IISD** Twitter thread: [here](#)
- The **OCP** Twitter thread: [here](#)
- The **UNFCCC** webcast: [here](#)



# EVENTS PARTNERS



The Ocean Action Events are organised by MP-GCA Ocean & Coastal Zones, the Ocean & Climate Platform and the High-level Climate Champions, with the support of:



# ABOUT THE MARRAKESH PARTNERSHIP - GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION FOR OCEAN & COASTAL ZONES

Building on the recognition that all Parties to the UNFCCC and Non Party Stakeholders (NPS) must take action to reach the goals set by the Paris Agreement, the Marrakesh Partnership for Global Climate Action (MP-GCA) was launched in 2016 during COP22. Under the leadership of the High-Level Climate Champions (HLC), the MP-GCA acts as a framework to raise ambition and help accelerate the pace and scale of climate action. It especially aims at strengthening and nurturing the mobilisation of NPS and their collaboration with Parties to the Convention.

“Ocean and coastal zones” is one of the priority themes of the MP-GCA, among 6 others (Energy, Human settlements, Industry, Land Use, Transport and Water). The MP-GCA Ocean & Coastal Zones brings together 120 organisations from non-state actors - including NGOs, business and industry, indigenous populations, research and academic institutes, international organisations - to raise ambition and accelerate ocean-based climate solutions. Since COP22, in Marrakech, the MP-GCA Ocean & Coastal Zones coordinates the official Ocean Action Day at COP.

At COP26, the MP-GCA Ocean & Coastal zones launched [the Ocean For Climate Declaration](#) endorsed by 120 organisations.



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