



THE OCEAN AND CLIMATE CHANGE DIALOGUE

UNFCCC SBSTA 64

10-11 June 2026, Bonn, Germany

SYNTHESIS REPORT



Abbreviations and acronyms:

AG	Activation Group
AILAC	Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDR	Carbon Dioxide Removal
COP	Conference of Parties
DOALOS	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
eNGO	environmental Non-Governmental Organisations
EU	European Union
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GST	Global Stocktake
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LCIPP	Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform
LDC	Least Developed Country
mCDR	marine Carbon Dioxide Removal
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
RINGO	Research and Independent Non-Governmental Organisations
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SCF	Standing Committee on Finance
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNESCO	United Nations Education Science and Culture Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Authors: Whitney Berry (Ocean Conservancy), Anna-Marie Laura (Ocean Conservancy), Marine Lecerf (Ocean & Climate Platform) and Paul-Emile Pissier (Ocean & Climate Platform).

Contributors: Tom Brook (WWF), Fiona Cromarty (Conservation International), Jill Hamilton (Conservation International), Maike Nicolai (GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel), Kushaal Raj (Conservation International), Maximilian Schwarz (European Bureau for Conservation and Development), Susanna Tol (Wetlands International) and Julika Tribukait (WWF).

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Disclaimer: This synthesis report provides a brief overview of the presentations and discussions that took place during the 2026 Ocean & Climate Change Dialogue, in anticipation of the more detailed summary report that will be prepared by the co-facilitators with the support of the UNFCCC Secretariat.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **2026 Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue** (10-11 June, Bonn, Germany) focused on three main areas, namely (1) ocean-based priorities in NDCs, (2) means of implementation, and (3) ocean-climate-biodiversity synergies and international cooperation. It highlighted **Parties' interest in making the Dialogue more strategic**, enhancing its role in driving ocean integration across UNFCCC processes to ensure it effectively connects proven solutions to the mechanisms that can help scale them.

- **Ocean-based measures are now widely integrated in NDCs**, with over three-quarters of 2025 submissions including at least one ocean component. However, high-impact mitigation measures (decarbonised shipping, offshore oil and gas phase out, and offshore renewable energy) continue to lag behind. Persistent barriers, including limited finance, fragmented data, weak institutional coordination, and heavy reliance on conditional commitments, continue to constrain delivery. As we shift from commitment to action, participants highlighted the Blue NDC Challenge and its implementation taskforce – to be launched officially at COP31.
- **Finance, technology transfer and capacity building remain the critical bottleneck for means of implementation**, particularly for SIDS and LDCs. Participants called for simplified access to climate finance, a shift toward long-term programmatic investment, and a whole-of-finance approach blending public, private, and innovative instruments. In this context, the forthcoming 2026 SCF Forum was highlighted as a pivotal opportunity to advance recommendations on scale, fragmentation, and access. Additionally, capacity building was identified as essential to data collection, blue carbon accounting, and Monitoring, Reporting and Verification systems.
- **To optimise efforts and resources, participants called for greater coherence between climate, biodiversity, and adaptation frameworks** – identifying the Rio Conventions as a key entry point for advancing synergies. The entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement was widely welcomed as a critical bridge for operationalising synergies, including with the Global Biodiversity Framework. Participants also underscored the importance of recognising and integrating Indigenous Peoples' and local leadership across ocean governance frameworks, and called for strengthened ocean observation and data systems.
- **Participants converged on the need for a structured, multi-year development plan for the Dialogue**. Without a shared direction and multi-year plan, the Dialogue risks remaining a knowledge-sharing exercise disconnected from key decisions such as NDCs, climate finance, and the Global Stocktake. This plan could transform the Dialogue into a coherent instrument that connects proven ocean-based solutions to the political, technical, and financial mechanisms needed to scale them.
- **Participants also used the Dialogue to prepare for COP31**, calling for these conclusions to serve as a foundation for a strong, implementation-oriented ocean outcome. Key priorities include the submission of remaining NDCs with strengthened ocean ambition, integration of the ocean into the second Global Stocktake, a dedicated reflection of ocean finance needs in COP31 decisions, and initial steps for the Dialogue's multiyear development plan.

► HIGH-LEVEL MESSAGES IN PREPARATION FOR COP31

Participants emphasised that COP31 should capture and operationalise the themes and recommendations emerging from the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue, while helping integrate ocean priorities more systematically across UNFCCC processes. Options identified to operationalise ocean-climate integration included, but were not limited to:

1. Call for the **submission of remaining NDCs** with strengthened ocean-based climate action, depending on national context, while elevating the **Blue NDC Challenge** and its Implementation Taskforce as a key lever to deliver on existing NDC commitments.
2. Deepen ocean-based climate action by supporting the integration of the ocean in the technical process and outputs of the **Second Global Stocktake**, as well as in the **Enhanced Transparency Framework** and related Biennial Transparency Reports.
3. Call for increasing access to climate finance for ocean-based solutions, including in Party submissions to the **Standing Committee on Finance's** draft guidance to Operating Entities of the Financial Mechanism, during the 2026 SCF Forum on 'Financing Climate Action in Water Systems and the Ocean', and during the dedicated COP31 session on climate finance needs for Small Island Developing States.
4. Continue and strengthen the **Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue** to enhance its role in advancing ocean integration across UNFCCC processes, ensuring it effectively connects solutions to the mechanisms that can scale them, including by:
 - Establishing a structured, multi-year development plan aligned with the Paris Agreement Implementation cycle;
 - Ensuring the key messages and recommendations emerging from the Dialogue are integrated systematically across UNFCCC work programmes, constituted bodies, negotiation streams, and finance discussions, including the SCF;
 - Inviting work programmes and constituted bodies to report back during the Dialogue on how they are integrating ocean-related issues into their work and collect feedback on additional opportunities, in line with previous COP decisions;
 - Considering ocean focal points within relevant constituted bodies, work programmes, committees, and at the national level, to strengthen coordination, identify integration opportunities at the UNFCCC, and improve institutional continuity at the national level; and
 - Developing a periodic checkpoint or review mechanism, for example every five years, to assess progress made through the Dialogue, including how ocean-related recommendations and priorities have been integrated into UNFCCC processes, COP outcomes, and implementation efforts.
5. Showcase ocean initiatives under the **Action Agenda** and promote the Blue Package to shift the baseline of what is considered possible and raise overall ambition.
6. Enhance policy coherence and deepen international cooperation, particularly with the **Rio Conventions**, to advance synergies across the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus at the implementation level.

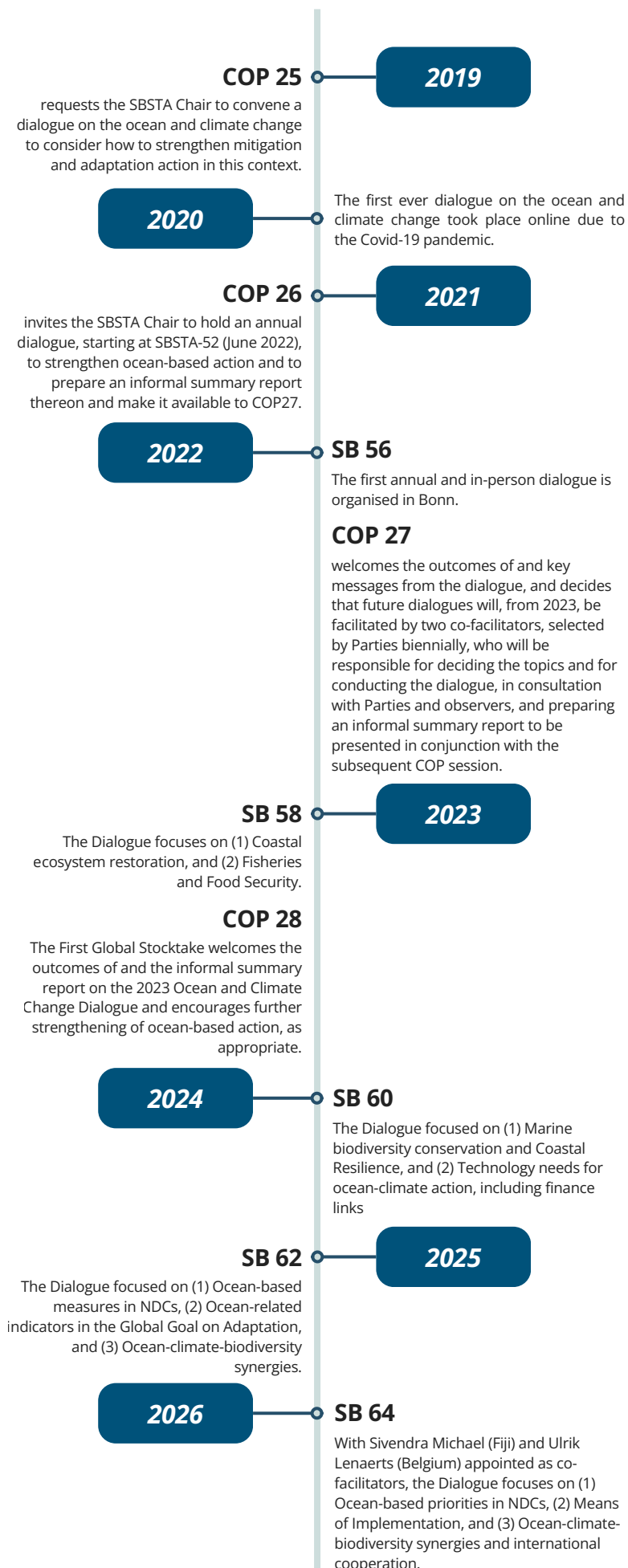
► INTRODUCTION

The **Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue provides a dedicated space for the ocean under the Climate Convention (UNFCCC)**. Initially created as a one-time event at COP 25, momentum quickly followed and, at COP 26, parties made the dialogue annual. As explained in more detail in the article [‘The Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue in the Implementation Era’](#), it was **designed to better integrate ocean issues across the wider climate agenda, ensuring it can help unlock resources needed to advance ocean-based climate solutions**.

The [2026 edition of the Dialogue was held on 10-11 June in Bonn, Germany](#), under the leadership of the two co-facilitators Dr. Sivendra Michael (Fiji) and Ulrik Lenaerts (Belgium). It was framed as a bridge between the 11th Our Ocean Conference in Kenya (16–18 June 2026), the Pacific Pre-COP in Fiji (5–8 October 2026), and COP31 in Türkiye (9–20 November 2026). **This year’s Dialogue focused on three topics: ocean-based priorities in NDCs, means of implementation, and ocean-climate-biodiversity synergies and international cooperation**. This selection of topics was initially presented in the [co-facilitators’ vision](#), refined during an [exchange of views](#) with Parties and stakeholders, and eventually consolidated into an [information note](#).



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé



► HIGH-LEVEL OPENING

The co-facilitators opened the Dialogue by welcoming the growing recognition of the central role of the ocean in delivering on climate ambition, and reaffirmed their vision for the Dialogue. Speakers unanimously presented the Dialogue as a **critical milestone** on the road to Antalya. They called for the **development of actionable messages to translate ambition into implementation**, while mainstreaming ocean integration across and beyond the UNFCCC. They stressed that the Dialogue should help secure ambitious outcomes for the ocean at COP31.

Ms. **Cecilia Kinuthia-Njenga**, speaking on behalf of UNFCCC Executive Secretary, encouraged co-facilitators to reinforce ambition and ensure continuity and coherence across the UNFCCC and beyond. Ms. **Carol Franco**, Vice-Chair of SBSTA, highlighted the Dialogue as an important opportunity to strengthen enabling conditions, including by mobilising and

scaling predictable, accessible, and adequate finance. Building on these insights, Mr. **Ali Mohamed**, Special Envoy for Climate Change for the President of Kenya, expressed his vision for the Dialogue to act as a bridge between the Our Ocean Conference and COP31, and his support for a structured multi-year development plan that would turn the strong ocean signal into coherent ocean-based climate action.

Finally, **Ambassador Peter Thomson**, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean, repeated his mantra – *“there is no healthy planet without a healthy ocean”* – and stressed that a healthy ocean requires the full implementation of the Paris Agreement. He pointed to the recent International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion to recall states’ legal obligations to tackle climate change; while stressing the importance of coherent delivery across climate, ocean, and biodiversity agendas.

► COP31 PRESIDENCY SEGMENT ON THE OCEAN

Honorable Inia Seruiratu, COP31 Pacific Oceans Envoy, Fiji

Inia Seruiratu stated that the ocean is the bedrock of the Pacific region’s climate system and biodiversity but also the home, identity, and cultural foundation of Pacific peoples. He stressed that these connections are inseparable from Pacific livelihoods and food security, with sustainable fisheries, particularly tuna, supporting millions across the region and forming a cornerstone of climate resilience. He welcomed the ongoing process on a [UN General Assembly declaration on the preservation of statehood in the face of sea level rise](#) as a critical advance for the sovereignty of Pacific nations facing climate impacts they are not responsible for. He also emphasised the **importance of integrating ocean considerations**

across all UNFCCC processes – notably mitigation, adaptation, finance and the second Global Stocktake. He committed, in his role as Envoy, to **advancing the [Ocean Breakthroughs](#)**. He specifically highlighted the transformative potential of green shipping corridors for the Pacific, noting that decarbonising maritime transport is not only an emissions imperative but a means of reducing costs and strengthening connectivity for island communities. He closed by affirming the need to elevate Pacific-led, community-driven, and science-based initiatives, invoking a Pacific ethos: *“We are not divided by the ocean. We are connected by it.”*

Dr. Sally Box, Deputy President of Negotiations and COP31 Chief Negotiator, Australia

Dr. Sally Box emphasised that protecting and sustainably managing the ocean requires collective engagement from all nations. She framed COP31 as *“a global COP for a global challenge”*, calling for **more practical, investable, and scalable ocean-based climate action**. Dr. Box commended growing integration of ocean-based measures in NDCs, and defined COP31 Presidency’s role as to help Parties deliver on these commitments – by setting up the right enabling conditions – while ratcheting up ambition for future NDCs, NAPs, Biennial Transparency Reports, with a view towards the second

Global Stocktake. She conveyed the **strong preference heard from Parties for integration and mainstreaming of the ocean across existing workstreams** rather than a siloed standalone agenda item. Dr. Box stressed the importance of the pre-COP in Fiji and Tuvalu, as it should spotlight to world leaders the lived experience of climate-vulnerable and frontline communities. She closed with a call to join the growing *“ocean current”* from Bonn to COP31 and beyond, stressing that waves are often short and tides go back and forth, but an ocean current is a continuous and powerful movement.

Ms. Tuğba Dinçbaş, Director of the Action Agenda, COP31 Presidency, Türkiye

Ms. Dinçbaş reaffirmed Türkiye's close coordination with Australia and underscored the central role of Pacific leadership in ensuring that ocean and seas priorities reflect the realities of climate-vulnerable communities. Framing COP31 as a "*COP of the future*", she presented Türkiye's priority on Ocean and Seas as anchored in implementation and cooperation. Ms. Dinçbaş acknowledged that many countries have **clear needs and promising ideas but lacked access to capital, capacity building, and partnerships** to move from planning to delivery. In this regard, she commended the [Blue NDC Challenge](#) and [Blue Package](#) as concrete examples of implementation pathways. She also described the **Action Agenda as a**

mechanism to connect political ambition with practical delivery – closing the implementation gap between multilateral commitments and real-world action, notably on ecosystem resilience, ocean observation, coastal adaptation, finance, technology, and capacity building. Türkiye, Ms. Dinçbaş noted, is committed to **regionally grounded perspectives** – given the country's direct exposure to pressures facing semi-enclosed seas. She emphasised the critical role of regional institutions, highlighting the newly established [Climate Change Regional Activity Centre](#) as a vehicle for cooperation on adaptation and resilience across the Mediterranean.



Intervention from the floor — Mr. Robert Karoro, Facilitative Working Group, Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform

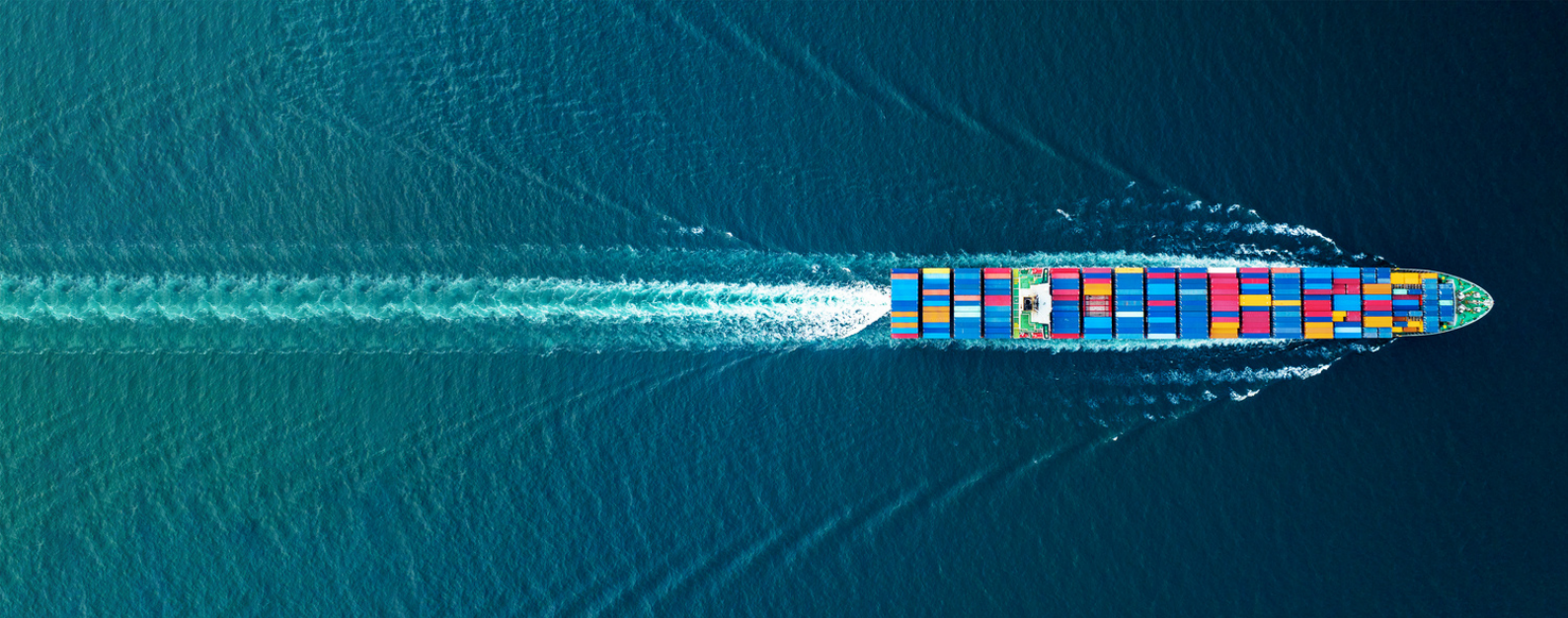
Echoing Inia Seruiratu's statement, Mr. Karoro emphasised that, in Pacific Indigenous cultures, the ocean is not merely a resource but life itself: peoples, culture, natural elements and the ocean being all bound in kinship together. Mr. Karoro stressed the **necessity to strengthen the role of Indigenous peoples in ocean policy**, pointing to the Paris Agreement's recognition of the importance of ecosystem integrity for climate action, including the ocean. He recalled that the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform provides an important

space under the UNFCCC to bring together Indigenous peoples, Local communities, Parties, and other relevant stakeholders for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange. In this regard, he invited participations to an [open call for submissions](#) on the Platform's 2028-2031 work plan, to help strengthen the role of Indigenous peoples and local communities in the global stewardship of the ocean, and their leadership in ocean-based climate action.

Intervention from the floor — Ms. Jessie Turner, Coordinator of Global Climate Action Agenda Activation Group 7 and Ocean Community of Action

Ms. Jessie Turner announced that Activation Group 7 under the Global Climate Action Agenda (which comprises over 50 ocean-climate initiatives from civil society) is **updating the Blue Package**, notably with progress-tracking metrics aligned with the second Global Stocktake. She outlined four core roles for the group on the road to COP31: (1) sharpening sectoral indicators for mitigation and adaptation with the

[Ocean Breakthroughs Dashboard](#); (2) leveraging finance commitments through existing and innovative mechanisms; (3) advancing coordinated governance, including through the **Blue NDC Challenge**; and (4) elevating national and regional examples of ocean-climate action. She expressed the Community of Action's readiness to shepherd and support COP31 Presidency's ocean-focused initiatives.



TOPIC 1: OCEAN-BASED PRIORITIES IN NDCs

► PRESENTATIONS

Ms. Ana Paula Prates, Director, Department of Oceans and Coastal Management, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil

Ms. Prates commended the growing momentum on ocean solutions, stressing the need to accelerate both implementation of ocean action and ocean integration across the UNFCCC. However, she underlined that **limited climate finance, insufficient technical and institutional capacity, fragmented ocean data, and weak project and investment pipelines** continue to constrain the shift from ambition to action. As a response to this implementation gap, Brazil is inviting Parties to join the **Blue NDC Challenge**, noting the launch of its **implementation taskforce** to foster technical cooperation, strengthen capacities, and connect governments with financial and delivery partners, so as to accelerate implementation of ocean

ambition. To illustrate how Brazil walks the talk, Ms. Prates presented Brazil's effort to align its NDC, National Adaptation Plan, and NBSAP, leveraging Marine Spatial Planning to reconcile conservation, sustainable ocean economies, and climate objectives. In line with the need to mainstream the ocean across the UNFCCC, including by disseminating the Dialogue's conclusions, Ms. Prates identified several complementary channels through which ocean priorities should be advanced, including the [Belém Mission to 1.5°C](#), the [UAE Dialogue on Implementation of the Global Stocktake outcomes](#), and the 2026 SCF Forum.

Mr. Kassim Gawusu-Toure, Ocean Lead Coordinator, African Group of Negotiators

Mr. Gawusu-Toure noted that more than half of Africa's coastal nations had integrated ambitious ocean actions into their new NDC submissions – spanning coastal resilience, sustainable food production, and blue carbon ecosystem protection. He called for a decisive **shift from defining high-level ambition to securing the structural machinery for localised delivery**. In this regard, he stressed that implementation requires breaking down national ministerial silos and strengthening coordination across sectors so that ocean-based commitments can

move to coherent delivery. Highlighting that nearly half of ocean NDC commitments by African nations remain conditional on external support, he deplored that finance and technical assistance are not materialising at the necessary pace. He emphasised the need for baseline data integration within national GHG inventories, institutional and regulatory enablers to close data gaps, investment in data observation, and action to address administrative silos and fragmented governance. He also raised the issue of **loss and damage**, noting that several African

countries already confront realities transcending adaptation and face severe economic and cultural losses. Against this backdrop, he put forward three priority actions for the Dialogue: fostering operational synergies with the 2026 SCF Forum; ensuring that any new technical guidance or reporting frameworks imposed no additional burden on developing countries; and establishing a **structured multi-year development plan** aligned with the Paris Agreement cycle to mainstream Dialogue outcomes into negotiated decisions at COP31.



Mr. Hiratsuka Jiro, Director, Office of Climate Change Negotiations and Cooperation, Ministry of Environment, Japan

Mr. Jiro presented Japan's approach to integrating blue carbon ecosystems into its latest NDC, highlighting a world-first expansion of scope to **estimate and report removals in seagrass meadows and seabeds in 2024**. He underscored the **importance of inter-ministerial coordination**, explaining Japan's division of responsibilities between the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, which

determined area estimation methodology, and the Fisheries Agency research council, which established removal factors. He also stressed the need for **strong enabling environments**, exemplified by Japan's national grant programme, biodiversity conservation legislation, the [J-Blue voluntary carbon crediting system](#), as well as the country's participation in the [International Partnership for Blue Carbon](#).

Mr. Jonathan Baines, Program Manager, World Resources Institute's Ocean Programme

Mr. Baines presented the [World Resources Institute's analysis of NDCs](#), noting that the ocean is moving "*from the margins to the mainstream*" of national climate policies. While he acknowledged a remarkable leap in ambition, he stressed that significant room remains for improvement, particularly in **mitigation-oriented sectors with the highest potential**: offshore renewables, shipping decarbonisation, aquatic food systems, and the phase-out of offshore oil and gas. He noted that closing the mitigation gap would require **stronger whole-of-government approaches**, including stronger mandates of industry-focused ministries. He also highlighted that private-sector involvement remains an area for improvement, both in the development and implementation of

ocean-related NDC priorities. Mr. Baines stressed that integration of ocean commitments in NDCs was only a first step, and that the question now was **how to deliver the support nations needed**, with low-income countries prioritising participatory governance and inclusion; lower-middle-income countries emphasising coordination and monitoring systems; and finance being the dominant priority only among high-income countries. Across all groups, however, governance is the most frequently requested form of support, suggesting that **implementation readiness must precede investment readiness**. In this regard, Mr. Baines welcomed the **Blue NDC Challenge's taskforce** as a key vehicle to provide this support.

Intervention from the floor — Dr. Karen Evans, Head, Ocean Science Section, IOC-UNESCO

Dr. Evans welcomed the Dialogue's focus on NDC implementation and noted its direct relevance to the IOC's mandate as the only United Nations agency fully focused on the ocean. She flagged that many member states noted the **lack of monitoring, baseline data and financing for observation** as key barriers to recognising blue carbon ecosystems as nature-based solutions and including them in NDCs. She highlighted IOC's leadership in this space, citing the [International Partnership for Blue Carbon](#), the [Blue Carbon](#)

[Initiative](#), and the [Blue Carbon Finance Toolbox](#) as guidance tools for aligning blue carbon commitments across global frameworks and financing their implementation. She called on Parties to improve ocean data collection and sharing via the Global Ocean Observing System, and encouraged multi-lateral cooperation to build technical capacity, generate ocean data, and strengthen science-based decision-making.

► KEY MESSAGES FROM BREAKOUT GROUPS

	MODERATORS	RAPPORTEURS
1.	Anna-Marie Laura, <i>Ocean Conservancy</i>	Marine Lecerf, <i>Ocean & Climate Platform</i>
2.	Jessie Turner, <i>United Nations Foundation</i>	Maximilian Schwarz, <i>European Bureau for Conservation and Development</i>
3.	Narelle Hill, <i>International Climate Negotiations and Engagement, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia</i>	John Powell, <i>UNFCCC Secretariat</i>

Guiding questions

- What specific implementation opportunities and barriers exist in translating NDC commitments into on-the-ground action across the identified ocean-based priority areas (protecting and restoring marine ecosystems, sustainable food production, ocean-based renewables and transitioning away from fossil fuels, sustainable tourism, coastal resilience and tackling emissions from marine transport)? How can Parties address other challenges such as in relation to Loss and Damage?
- What enabling conditions—regulatory, technical, institutional, and financial—are still needed to accelerate implementation and scaling of ocean-based climate action in the NDCs?
- What good practices or early-mover experience can Parties and observers share that others could replicate or adapt, and how can the Dialogue support the development of NDCs guidance to accelerate implementation of the ocean-related commitments? How can the Global Climate Action agenda, the Blue NDC Challenge, NDC Partnership, and the Global Implementation Accelerator be leveraged?

- Ocean-based climate solutions can help close the ambition and implementation gaps in achieving the Paris Agreement goals. The Dialogue highlighted examples across sectors, including mangrove restoration, offshore renewable energy, zero-carbon shipping, low-emission fisheries and aquaculture, robust ocean observation systems, and offshore oil and gas phaseout initiatives. Despite these proven examples and significant recent progress integrating these solutions in national climate plans, they remain underfunded and under-integrated in NDCs.
- Of the 119 Parties with new NDCs as of COP30, over three-quarters (91 Parties) include at least one ocean-based component, of which 86% include ocean-based adaptation measures and 55% include mitigation measures. Most of the updated NDCs continue to rely heavily on conditional ambition and finance (59% of Parties have reported finance-related needs, of which 47% have made conditional commitments).
- There is an opportunity to engage sustainable blue economy industry partners more closely in NDC development and implementation. As marine renewable energy and other ocean related decarbonisation activities remain under-represented in NDCs so far, greater engagement could also help increase their integration and the development of these mitigation solutions to social equity, biodiversity, and sustainability principles.
- Ocean-based climate solutions in NDCs can move from commitments to implementation through stronger institutional and national ministerial coordination, targeted finance, technical support, and measurable accountability mechanisms.
- Accelerating implementation requires improved access to practical guidance paired with support capacity to use the guidance tools, technology transfer, and locally relevant data, including greater translation of materials and targeted

dissemination support, notably to communities and the private sector, ensuring meaningful national and sub-national engagements.

- Strategic partnerships are critical to mobilising technical assistance, finance, and delivery capacity for ocean-based climate action:
 - The Blue NDC Challenge and its implementation taskforce were highlighted as important opportunities to support countries in developing and implementing ambitious, investable ocean-based climate commitments.
 - Regional cooperation and bilateral agreements on sector-specific implementation, research, monitoring, and financing can help address capacity and resource gaps, particularly for developing countries, SIDS, and LDCs.
- UNFCCC processes should be leveraged to deepen ocean-climate action in NDCs, including the second Global Stocktake and the Enhanced Transparency Framework.
- Enhanced ocean observation and open data initiatives are key enabling conditions for evidence-based NDC implementation and transparency.
- Remaining NDCs must be submitted, and should include strengthened ocean-climate action, as appropriate and based on national context.

Examples: [OceanEye](#) (ocean observation); [Niue Ocean Wide \(NOW\) Trust](#) (finance partnership).



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé



TOPIC 2: MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

► PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Charles Hamilton, Climate Change Advisor, Government of the Bahamas, speaking on behalf of AOSIS

Noting that **SDG 14 is the least financed of all SDGs**, Mr. Hamilton called for accessible, predictable, and concessional public finance with dedicated channels that would lower the risks for capital deployment in long-term marine projects – stressing that despite climate finance promises by developed countries, SIDS face structural barriers in accessing it. He also called for sustained, predictable, and long-term support on capacity building, aimed not only at developing but at retaining capacities. On another note, Mr. Hamilton

highlighted the imbalance between adaptation and mitigation technologies available to SIDS, called for upscaling small-size solutions through regionally shared technology repositories, and noted that SIDS could potentially become exporters of ocean-based renewable energy. He concluded with a call for the **uptake of the Dialogue's outputs into operational policy decisions at COP31** – highlighting the need to unlock resources and work forward with the implementation of the Dialogue's conclusions.

Ms. Wenxin Li, Senior Climate Change Specialist, Global Environment Facility

Ms. Li emphasised that **ocean finance is fundamentally country-driven**: despite GEF being the financial mechanism for six multilateral environmental agreements and largest multilateral public funder in the ocean-climate-biodiversity space – with USD 2.4 billion invested across over 370 projects – its support remains tied to national programming requests. She therefore encouraged Parties to use the

Dialogue to identify and remove barriers to implementation, and to strengthen collaboration across conventions. To support these efforts, she laid out a three-step pathway from ambition to implementation: strengthening policy foundations, mobilising finance and investment, and ensuring carbon market readiness.

Ms. Isobel Bartholomew, Standing Committee on Finance, Forum Co-Facilitator

Ms. Bartholomew outlined the mandate, preparation, and emerging findings related to the forthcoming SCF Forum on Financing Climate Action for the Ocean and Water Systems (21–22 September 2026, Sydney, Australia). She described the Forum as a **bridge between practice and policy**, complementary to the Dialogue, and channelling project financing expe-

riences into the intergovernmental process to inform COP decisions. Drawing on 42 submissions received in response to an [open call for inputs](#) to prepare the 2026 SCF Forum, she identified three cross-cutting messages: on **scale**, financing remains far below needs and requires a whole-of-finance approach combining public, private, and innovative

instruments; on **implementation**, the key challenge is translating priorities into investable opportunities, hampered by weak pipelines, limited preparation support, and inaccessible finance; and on **fragmentation**, ocean finance remains scattered across sectors, institutions, and funding channels,

Mr. Jens Sedemund, Head, Environment and Climate Change, Development Cooperation Directorate, OECD

Mr. Sedemund presented the OECD's methodology for tracking development finance for the ocean. The latest figures showed that **ocean-related finance commitments had grown** from USD 2.9 billion in 2010 to USD 4.5 billion in 2024 — representing between 0.8% and 1.4% of total global finance. Mr. Sedemund however noted significant year to year fluctuations, with a 20% decline in 2024 relative to 2023. He also noted that **not all ocean finance is dedicated to environmental sustainability**. Of the USD 4.5 billion committed in 2024, 75% explicitly supported environmental objectives — up from 65% in 2023, though with sharp sectoral disparities: maritime transport stood at only 46% sustainability

calling for more coordinated and programmatic approaches. In conclusion, Ms. Bartholomew noted that the [draft programme for the Forum](#) was to be finalised soon, and she encouraged continued Parties' engagement in the SCF work and forum preparation.

focus versus 85% for fishing. Finally, Mr. Sedemund presented the [OECD guidance for sustainable ocean development cooperation](#) as a resource for country-level planning and investment tracking. In short, the document puts forward five recommendations: promoting the four pillars of the sustainable ocean economy (namely ocean-based economy, ocean equity, healthy ecosystems, ocean-based climate action), supporting integrated ocean policies in developing countries, targeting official development assistance to unlock broader financing, building capacities and ocean economies at scale, and strengthening cross-border governance.

➤ KEY MESSAGES FROM BREAKOUT GROUPS

	MODERATORS	RAPPORTEURS
1.	Espen Ronneberg, <i>The Pacific Community</i>	Xuechan Ma, <i>Food and Agriculture Organisation</i>
2.	Sara Traerup, <i>UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre</i>	Stephanie Ockenden, <i>Independent Consultant</i>
3.	Karen Evans, <i>Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO</i>	Natalie Mangondo, <i>Care About Climate</i>

Guiding questions

- To what extent is existing climate finance accessible and fit-for-purpose for ocean-based action, particularly for developing countries, SIDS, and LDCs? What are the key financing instruments and sources available to support the implementation of ocean-based action in the NDCs and NAPs?
- What support can the Dialogue provide to Parties in scaling ocean-related finance and addressing the finance barriers identified in NDCs? How can the 2026 SCF Forum support Parties in improving access to ocean-related finance?
- What opportunities and good practices exist for Parties to strengthen capacity-building and accelerate the deployment of ocean-based technologies—while addressing the identified barriers in Parties’ NDCs on institutional capacity, technical expertise, technology transfer, and data gaps identified, particularly for developing countries, SIDS, and LDCs?

- Translating ocean-climate commitments into action at scale requires adequate means of implementation and strengthening enablers, particularly finance and capacity-building. Scaling ocean finance requires greater alignment with national ocean priorities, enhanced readiness, and simplification of processes to improve access.
- Climate finance for ocean-based climate action remains inadequate relative to country needs, rising loss and damage, and the scale of conditional commitments reflected in NDCs, particularly for developing countries, including LDCs, SIDS, and vulnerable coastal nations. The latest statistics from OECD highlight that finance for the sustainable ocean economy represented less than 1% of total ODA in 2024.
- Ocean-climate solutions are not prioritised within national strategies, plans, and funding proposals despite their ability to improve global food and energy security, protect coastal communities, and contribute to the delivery of the Paris Agreement.
- There is a great need to simplify access to multilateral development funds given complex and lengthy procedures, high transaction costs, timelines inconsistent with national budget cycles, short project time horizons, and limitations in project eligibility criteria.
- The Standing Committee on Finance's 2026 Forum on Financing Climate Action in Water Systems and the Ocean was highlighted as a critical opportunity to bring together key actors across the financing system, including to showcase investable solutions, explore financing for ocean action across multilateral climate funds, and support countries in identifying implementation partners.
- Awareness should be raised on how the UNFCCC's Multilateral Climate Funds channel finance to ocean and coastal action, to support countries to prioritise and access finance.
- Capacity building and technical assistance are critical for unlocking finance for ocean action. They can help countries develop the knowledge and evidence-base to identify needs and opportunities, and provide project preparation support, in particular related to data collection and management, including for reporting across KPIs and blue carbon assessments to meet Monitoring, Reporting and Verification requirements for carbon market projects.
- Countries also need technology support and capacity building, particularly to strengthen data systems, and institutional and governance capacity. This is particularly important for energy-based technologies, which must be affordable, needs-based, and tailored to the context for coastal, small-scale actors and local communities.
- No one size fits all finance mechanism will solve the financing challenge. Local contexts matter - and to scale up and enhance access it is critical to move from small, stand-alone projects to long-term, programmatic investments, such as support to national coastal resilience plans and sustainable blue economy transitions, where it is important to ensure that climate finance (including grants) directly reaches and benefits vulnerable coastal communities, with consideration for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.
- Enhanced technical capacity is needed at national and regional levels to support implementation of ocean-climate solutions, including areas such as blue carbon assessment and accounting, adaptation planning, ocean monitoring, and integrated ecosystem management.



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé



TOPIC 3: OCEAN-CLIMATE-BIODIVERSITY SYNERGIES AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

► PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Iván Vejar, Head of Climate Change and Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile, speaking on behalf of AILAC

Mr. Vejar stressed that **effective action requires policy coherence**, and particularly the **alignment of NDCs with NBSAPs** and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. He also described the BBNJ Agreement as the greatest near-term opportunity for international cooperation on the ocean, pointing to the establishment of marine protected areas in the high seas as critical to operationalising

Global Biodiversity Framework targets in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Mr. Vejar called on all Parties to commit concurrently to maximum-ambition on integrated governance and to the rapid ratification and implementation of the BBNJ Agreement—both options being prerequisites to translate conceptual synergies into action on land and at sea.

Ms. Alessandra Lamotte, International Relations Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Ms. Lamotte recalled that 70% of the Earth's surface is ocean, yet only 5% of it has been explored. Underlining the EU's commitment to ocean observation and welcoming its inclusion in COP31 ocean priorities, she recalled how important monitoring systems and data sharing are for ocean policymaking. She detailed the **critical role of ocean observation across a broad range of areas**: protecting and restoring ocean health, boosting the blue economy, anticipating meteorological upheavals, strengthening coastal community resilience, and contributing to maritime security. As she put forth the European Commission EUR 50 million commitment to

strengthen the Global Ocean Observing System and EUR 12 million commitment to support resilient global ocean data systems, Ms. Lamotte introduced [OceanEye](#), a European Commission initiative designed to advance ocean research, knowledge, skills and innovation — with the ambition of positioning the EU as the world's leading provider of ocean intelligence by 2035, notably through an international alliance to support the Global Ocean Observing System and the development of a [European Digital Twin Ocean](#).

Ms. Valentina Germani, Senior Legal Officer, United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, and Interim Secretariat of the BBNJ Agreement

Ms. Germani pointed to the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement as a significant milestone for cooperation across governance frameworks. Indeed, she recalled that the Agreement's articles on area-based management tools, environmental impact assessments, as well as capacity building and marine technology transfer all incorporated climate change considerations. In line with the Dialogue's priority on

synergies, she also underscored that **central to the BBNJ Agreement's architecture is the obligation to enhance cooperation and coordination** with relevant frameworks and bodies. She suggested the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue could serve as a platform to discuss how these provisions relate to the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement. As she put it, *"the bridge is there, it's now up to Parties to use it."*



Mr. Leel Randeni, Director for Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka

Mr. Randeni first pointed to Sri Lanka's increasing ocean-climate vulnerabilities, then described a cascade of impacts the country experienced over the past decade, including mass coral bleaching and a severe flood in 2025. He emphasised the importance of ocean and coastal areas for Sri Lanka's communities and economy, particularly through fisheries which underpin livelihoods and contribute to food security. In this context, he outlined Sri Lanka's ocean commitments and ongoing efforts, including a national mangrove strategy, marine protected areas,

and integrated coastal zone management. At the same time, he identified persistent implementation gaps, notably the **fragmentation of responsibilities across government agencies as a core governance challenge**. To respond to these gaps, Mr. Randeni expressed interest in accessing advanced satellite-based data generation technologies, and called for **technology transfers** and blue carbon inventory data to strengthen future projections and climate-resilient planning.

Intervention from the floor — Mr. Tristan Tyrrell, Programme Management Officer, CBD Secretariat

Mr. Tyrrell drew attention to two areas of CBD work relevant to the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus. First, the **Global Review** of progress on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to be conducted at CBD COP17 (19-30 October 2026), would offer an important opportunity to assess progress on Target 8 – covering climate change and ocean acidification – alongside other ocean-climate-relevant targets. Second, a CBD expert workshop held in

December 2025 in Bergen, Norway had identified several opportunities for enhanced governance of the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including **strengthening scientific and technical knowledge** on climate change impacts on open ocean and deep-sea ecosystems, and **enhancing inter-organisational cooperation** to address knowledge gaps on the mesopelagic zone, benthic ecosystems, and climate change impacts.

► KEY MESSAGES FROM BREAKOUT GROUPS

	MODERATORS	RAPPORTEURS
1.	Kilaparti Ramakrishna, <i>Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution</i>	Loes Rutten, <i>Marine Environment Department, Belgium</i>
2.	Tristan Tyrrell, <i>Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity</i>	Chelsea Johnson, <i>Center for Climate and Energy Solutions</i>
3.	Valentina Germani, <i>UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea</i>	Katie Thiessen, <i>University of Plymouth & YOUNGO</i>

Guiding questions

- What scope do Parties see for strengthening alignment across NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs to support integrated ocean–climate–biodiversity action?
- How can the Dialogue support Parties in the national implementation of the BBNJ Agreement and strengthen mutual benefits in pursuing the goals of both the Paris Agreement and the BBNJ Agreement?
- How can the Dialogue promote international cooperation to support Parties in delivering on their ocean-based climate ambition? How can relevant regional and international processes, initiatives and mechanisms be leveraged to scale and implement ocean-based solutions?

- Parties stressed the importance of strengthening coherence between mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity, and sustainable development objectives, including stronger alignment between NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs.
- Participants welcomed discussions and efforts that highlight opportunities where nature-based solutions can advance climate and biodiversity action and where sustainable climate mitigation activities can also advance biodiversity action. Discussions considered how the BBNJ Agreement, having entered into force in January 2026, could act as a bridge for these opportunities.
- Participants noted that many countries continue to face significant institutional and technical capacity constraints that limit effective integration of ocean considerations across climate and biodiversity frameworks. Improved coordination of national focal points across ministries, as well as engagements with scientists, traditional knowledge holders, and the private sector, could better support this integration, with some participants highlighting proposals of establishing ocean focal points and national coordination platforms.
- Strengthened cooperation between the UNFCCC and related international processes and organisations – including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the BBNJ Agreement, UN DOALOS, the IMO, the International Whaling Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and sustainable development frameworks like the SDGs – can help accelerate implementation, improve efficiency, and scale ambition.



Credit: IISD/ENB | Maja Schmidt-Thomé

- The Dialogue was an important platform for connecting ocean, climate, and biodiversity agendas and supporting more operational, implementation-oriented discussions across negotiation streams.
- Participants emphasised the need to improve ocean observation and related technical capacity and data availability, including through open and accessible data systems such as the Global Mangrove Watch, to support national planning, implementation, transparency, and reporting under climate and biodiversity processes.
- Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems, local knowledge, and community-led approaches are critical for effective, equitable, and durable ocean-climate action and must be meaningfully integrated at all governance levels across policy development, implementation, monitoring, and reporting processes.



Credit: Ocean & Climate Platform | Marine Lecerf

► CLOSING PLENARY AND STATEMENTS

Participants expressed their strong appreciation for the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue as an effective forum to advance ocean and climate issues within the convention.

Participants welcomed the growing recognition of the ocean as a central pillar of climate action, while highlighting the **persistent implementation gap** – stressing the need to move from recognition to implementation. The EU called for scaling up sustainable **ocean-based mitigation actions** – with particular attention to offshore renewable energy and maritime decarbonisation, in line with the Roadmap to transition away from fossil fuels, while Iceland called for increased consideration of **blue food systems**. Brazil and France, for their part, reiterated their invitation for Parties to join the **Blue NDC Challenge**, which will soon be supported by an implementation taskforce to help countries turn their NDC commitments into concrete action.

In this context, participants highlighted the inadequacy and inaccessibility of climate finance for ocean action, particularly for SIDS and LDCs. Comoros emphasised the **urgent need for accessible and predictable finance, technology transfer, and capacity building** – seconded notably by Niue, Tuvalu, Chile, and Palau. Niue also noted the importance of non-market financing mechanisms, presenting Niue Ocean Wide's [Ocean Conservation Commitment](#) – a public-private partnership with a local NGO enabling voluntary stewardship contributions toward ocean conservation and community resilience – as a relevant non-market approach under the Paris Agreement. The Women and Gender Constituency added that climate finance should be provided as grants instead of loans, with direct access for grassroots communities.

Many participants – including the EU, Brazil, and the Environmental Integrity Group – pointed to this year's

SCF Forum, recognising it as a key opportunity to identify barriers and advance recommendations on financing mechanisms, calling for a report on its outcomes at COP31. Conservation International further suggested that the SCF appoint an Ocean Focal Point to lead consideration of ocean-climate finance gaps and opportunities across SCF activities, including future Biennial Assessments and progress reports on the \$100 billion goal and the New Collective Quantified Goal, and to attend annual Ocean and Climate Change Dialogues.

Additionally, many participants raised **knowledge gaps as a key implementation barrier**, noting the **importance of financing and sharing data**. RINGO stressed the critical need for sustained funding for global ocean observation systems – to monitor climate impacts, better understand the ocean carbon sink, and generate the evidence base needed to inform policy. Comoros and the Indigenous Peoples Organisation added that Indigenous peoples' knowledge, local community participation, and gender inclusivity should be central to the design, implementation, and monitoring of ocean strategies. Participants more broadly called for open, accessible data systems and **transdisciplinary approaches inclusive of natural and social sciences** as prerequisites for credible and equitable ocean-based climate action.

Speaking on behalf of the Environmental Integrity Group, Monaco stressed the need for solutions anchored in rigorous science and cooperation. Against this backdrop, concerns were raised regarding certain ocean-based activities, which may lead to ocean

degradation. The eNGO constituency warned against deep-sea mining and geoengineering – including marine carbon dioxide removal. France echoed these concerns by calling for a **precautionary pause on deep-sea mining**.

Finally, Parties and observers expressed global **support for an integrated rather than siloed approach to ocean action**. Repeated calls were made for stronger cooperation across the UNFCCC, CBD, BBNJ Agreement, IMO, and human rights treaties – with the EU notably emphasising the role of the Joint Liaison Group across the three Rio Conventions Secretariats for ocean integration. Palau urged that the Dialogue conclusions find their way into COP decisions, while France called for a **strong ocean signal in the second Global Stocktake**. That call was seconded by Monaco, which encouraged Türkiye and Australia to maintain a **strong blue thread at COP31**.

In conclusion, the co-facilitators identified the **NDC ambition cycle, means of implementation, and the second Global Stocktake** as the three pillars around which ocean integration must deepen. To this end, they outlined two main ways forward: the **development of a multi-year development plan for the Dialogue, with a view to securing its integration in a COP31 outcome**, and the systematic **dissemination of the Dialogue's conclusions across the UNFCCC**. They closed by calling on all participants to carry the "ocean climate current" forward – from Bonn to Mombasa, Pre-COP in Fiji, and COP31 in Antalya.

A summary report of the Dialogue will be published by the co-facilitators in the coming months.

