MEETING REPORT

ASIA PACIFIC Day for the OCEAN 27 October 2021

FOURTH ASIA-PACIFIC DAY FOR THE OCEAN

12:00 pm to 14:30 pm (Bangkok time)
Wednesday, October 27, 2021

ESCAP 75 MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

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Background

On 21 May 2020, ESCAP member States adopted a resolution on "Strengthening cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific," underscoring the importance of the Ocean for the region, and requesting the secretariat "to continue to strengthen current partnerships and to develop new partnerships, where appropriate, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, including through participatory, multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms."

In line with this mandate and following the success of the Day in the preceding three years, ESCAP organized its Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean on 27 October 2021 in a virtual modality to support member States and key stakeholders through systematic and inclusive dialogue on priority areas and challenges in our region, particularly to accelerate individual and collective actions to reach Sustainable Development Goal 14. Moreover, all the inputs received from a variety of stakeholders during the Third Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean were duly considered, including the addition of an interactive dialogue on ocean and climate synergies.

Over 400 participants with delegates representing different countries in the region, including small island developing states, engaged in this event. The Day for the Ocean also served as a regional review mechanism, focusing on a selection of SDG14 targets. This year these targets included, among others, 14.1 [Marine pollution], 14.2 [Marine and coastal ecosystems], and 14.a [Scientific knowledge, transfer of marine technology] aimed to support the region to accelerate action on the protection of the ocean through four parallel interactive dialogues and plenary discussions. The discussions focused on:

- International cooperation on the digital technologies to monitor ocean plastic pollution
- Inclusive Maritime Connectivity for Building Back Better
- Accounting for the ocean and economy linkages: data integration to protect marine and coastal ecosystems
- Ocean-climate nexus: blue carbon

The event featured the announcement of the Regional Decade Program: "Accelerating the delivery of SDG14 in Asia and the Pacific… the science we need for the ocean we want in Asia and the Pacific", developed by ESCAP in collaboration with partner UN agencies, to support the implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (the "Ocean Decade") in Asia and the Pacific.

Following the interactive dialogues, a plenary session provided an opportunity to collect feedback from each interactive dialogue to develop a consolidated regional perspective and support the upcoming review of SDG14 in 2022 during the 9th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, as well as to inform the 2022 UN Ocean Conference. This report summarizes key messages and recommendations from each interactive dialogue that highlight priority areas in response to challenges in the region.

Highlights and outcomes of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean

PLENARY MESSAGES FROM KEY REPRESENTATIVES

Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, opened the Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean by noting that the Asia-Pacific region is currently not on track to reach key targets, especially in the case of SDG 14. She highlighted critical challenges in the region such as (i) the increase of marine pollution in the region owing to the increase in single-use plastic waste generated during pandemic including billions of facemask (1.56 billion) entering the ocean, (ii) persisting maritime connectivity gaps in the region affecting countries and territories in the Pacific along with the need for greener vessels and shipping practices, (iii) the significance of ocean data accuracy, and accessibility to understand the ocean better and to facilitate policies, (iv) increased greenhouse gas emission (GHG) and their influence on the land and ocean.

She reiterated that the ocean is at the heart of ESCAP's work program, by conducting capacity development, developing new knowledge products and supporting activities to accelerate policymaking on: (i) efficient waste management systems utilizing advanced monitoring tools (remote sensors and artificial intelligence) to provide regular, automated updates on leakage of plastic waste from land-based sources into the waterways, (ii) regular, inclusive and systematic regional dialogue on the maritime connectivity to ensure regional cooperation and to reduce the environmental impact, (iii) integration of ocean data and statistics to improve regional and global policies towards sustainable oceans (ESCAP is leading the work to advance ocean accounting, through its co-chairing of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership and through development of national pilot activities within the region), and (iv) developing new programs to promote nature-based solutions to mitigate the stress on marine ecosystems and to reduce CO2 footprint on land. She also announced that in order to tackle these issues, ESCAP, in collaboration with other UN agencies, has developed a "Regional Decade Program" to support the implementation of the Ocean Decade in Asia-Pacific. The Decade Program will engage a variety of key stakeholders; including governments, civil society, the youth, the private sector, academia, and the scientific community, to support the development of the science we need for the ocean we want in Asia and the Pacific.

The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, Mr. Kitack Lim, outlined the significance of regional cooperation to overcome the global crisis of climate change, and the pandemic's negative impacts on job security, health, and environment. He anticipated that global events/high-level engagements such as COP26 would transform discussions and commitments to direct actions. He underscored the concrete actions of the maritime sector in supporting the battle against climate change by directly reducing greenhouse gas emissions from ships. He mentioned that the IMO is developing new

measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce gas emissions and new steps to accelerate the decarbonization of shipping. Thus, the maritime sector plays a crucial role in the global supply chain, ensuring a global post-covid economy and attaining sustainable goals in the transportation sector that support member states, embrace maritime digitalization, empower women, and unlock the potential of the blue economy.

The Minister of Natural Resources and Environment and Samoa Tourism Authority, H.E. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Salesa Pose Schuster, delivered the keynote address by emphasizing that the coastal and marine ecosystems provide food, livelihood, and coastal projection for over a billion people, while the impacts of over-exploitation, pollution, and climate change are alarming. He underscored the major threats to marine life (ocean acidification, plastic pollution, and other forms of pollution) and the importance of the ocean in the food security, livelihood, culture, and economic development of island nations like Samoa. He mentioned that Samoa is getting momentum towards a sustainable ocean, and they are focusing on implementing Samoa's national waste management strategy to support the global agreement on plastic pollution by preventing all discharges of plastic litter into the ocean. The following aspects of Samoa's ocean strategy for a healthy ocean/ecosystem were highlighted: (i) ocean management to sustain economic growth through commercial fishing, marine transportation, and tourism; (ii) in line with the Pacific Regional Integration Waste and Pollution Management Strategy, reduce pollution on land and ocean by integrated management of municipal waste, marine debris, including microplastic and ship source; (iii) improve collaboration and partnership in all government and non-government departments including local communities; (iv) Integrated ocean planning using Marine spatial planning tool giving centrality to livelihood and cultural wellbeing; and (v) initiatives to mangrove conservation. He acknowledged the partnership with UNESCAP in the successful implementation of ocean and water accounting.

KEY MESSAGES FROM INTERACTIVE DIALOGUES

Interactive Dialogue A: International cooperation on the digital technologies to monitor ocean plastic pollution.

The session was opened by a Mr. Terai Toru from Japan's Embassy in Thailand, who discussed the significant issue of marine plastic pollution and the importance of monitoring in order to take better action against marine plastic litter. He added that Japan is collaborating with international organizations to strengthen international countermeasures against marine plastic debris.

The delegates of the interactive dialogue recognized that any action against plastic pollution must be supported by an evidence-based study, which is why monitoring is important. Delegates stated that we now have access to a range of various remote sensing and analysis techniques, and methods are getting more automated. This brings us closer to building a digital twin of the ocean that helps us have an eye on the plastic pollution, how to monitor it and how to manage it.

The use of satellites and other types of technologies is emerging in this regard. There are multiple efforts from national space agencies to utilize the satellites to detect plastic in the ocean and the river's miles away from the ocean. Satellite data can be analyzed using artificial intelligence and algorithms to detect plastic pollution because of plastic's unique light absorption signature. They can also indirectly detect microplastic, which alters the surface texture of the water and is detectable by satellites. An expert from the International Atomic Energy Agency explained that we could also utilize nuclear techniques to detect microplastic pollution in the water and the consequences of microplastic in the fauna. Cities are now able to monitor plastic pollution using a range of tools (satellites, citizen science, cameras), combined with artificial intelligence to develop city-level action plans as part of ESCAP's "Closing the Loop" project. Participants concluded that much data is floating around from all these different technologies and efforts. However, we need to find a home for that data. For example, in a platform such as the Alliance to End Plastic Waste's Prism, which aims to bring all this information together in a comprehensive and easy-to-use format so that all stakeholders working on plastic pollution can access data from each other in a systematic way.

Interactive Dialogue B: Inclusive Maritime Connectivity for Building Back Better

The interactive dialogue on Inclusive Maritime Connectivity for Building Back Better highlighted the inclusivity dimension of shipping, focusing on the women in maritime, connectivity divides affecting the Pacific region and welfare and safety of seafarers.

The session highlighted the need for more women in the maritime industry onboard and onshore, as well as ensuring a safe working environment for women onboard ships in order to promote and embrace diversity. According to a WISTA international survey (2020) of 1128 female seafarers from 78 countries, 59 percent of them reported gender discrimination in the maritime sector, with 78 percent citing gender as the reason for this discrimination. To address gender disparities, especially during the post-pandemic phase, industry and stakeholders must deliberate and ensure that it is a sector that is welcoming to women, with better teamwork, innovation, and the sectors' ability to perform better. Another concern in the maritime sector is the need for sustainable and resilient port development strategies to establish a more inclusive maritime industry aligned with the SDGs. In the time of COVID-19, this was considered even more important. Delegates addressed the need of fostering economic synergies by encouraging innovation and expanding access to more affordable and reliable maritime services.

Furthermore, participants discussed the persisting maritime connectivity divide in the region, noting that the South Pacific Islands have the lowest connectivity in the world, with low import and export volumes and a small economic structure and population, indicating that this is an area that needs support. Implementing initiatives on finance investment like the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership and producing integrated data that would support national and international reforms was at the center of the discussion. The key components of the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership include (i) National cross-sector planning processes (ships, ports, energy, supporting services to identify holistic maritime development plans, new vessels across multiple scales, low-carbon energy pathways, enabling local enterprise and capacity building); (ii) intergovernmental coordination processes to identify multi-country development priorities for low carbon transformation of sea transport; and (iii) coordinated engagement with developed partners to develop a blended financial mechanism for multi-country investment. The development of open data product accounts in accordance with international statistical standards, which would allow findings to be mainstreamed in the decision-making process, this was one of the essential milestones underlined.

Finally, participants discussed the impacts of COVID-19 on seafarers and how critical it is for the world to comprehend the seafarer problem, including seafarers stuck on ships who are unable to disembark and return home, as well as their mental health and fatigue. The International Maritime Organization (IMO), highlighted the pressure on countries to identify seafarers as vital employees, the need to pressure countries to vaccinate seafarers and to ensure that they are not stranded. The session acknowledged IMO's efforts and expressed anticipation for greater progress in this area.

Interactive Dialogue C: Accounting for the ocean and economy linkages: data integration to protect marine and coastal ecosystems.

In this dialogue, participants noted the context, challenges and use for ocean accounts, which highlights the linkages between the economy and coastal and ocean ecosystems. Ocean accounting is a tool that goes beyond traditional economic indicators, like GDP, to support development of broader measures of sustainability and well-being. Ocean accounts provide a statistical framework for tracking human impacts on the marine environment and can be used to evaluate the relationship between economic outputs, policy decisions, and the trends in the size and health of coastal and marine ecosystems and flows of services from these ecosystems. Currently, ocean accounts are under active investigation and development, and several countries are evaluating the use of local and global datasets for development of pilot accounts. Potential local datasets include monitoring data on target ecosystems, fish trawl data and reports from governments and academic institutions. Global data sets include those from remote sensing and satellite data.

During this session, delegates from Australia, India, Indonesia, Palau, Thailand, and Vietnam explained the pilot projects in their country. These countries are at various stages in implementing the ocean accounts. For example, Australia is doing ocean accounts at the regional level but now progressing to the national level. India expressed the intention to develop ocean accounts and to support a blue economy approach. Palau also indicated the importance of ocean accounts to assess policy decisions and their impact on achieving environmental objectives.

Thailand emphasized the importance of ocean accounts in a similar way and expressed the need for collecting data to monitor ocean health and integrate the various social, economic and environmental indicators to inform policy decisions. For Vietnam developing ocean accounting is one of their priorities, and they have put in place specific legal and institutional frameworks that can promote the ocean accounts.

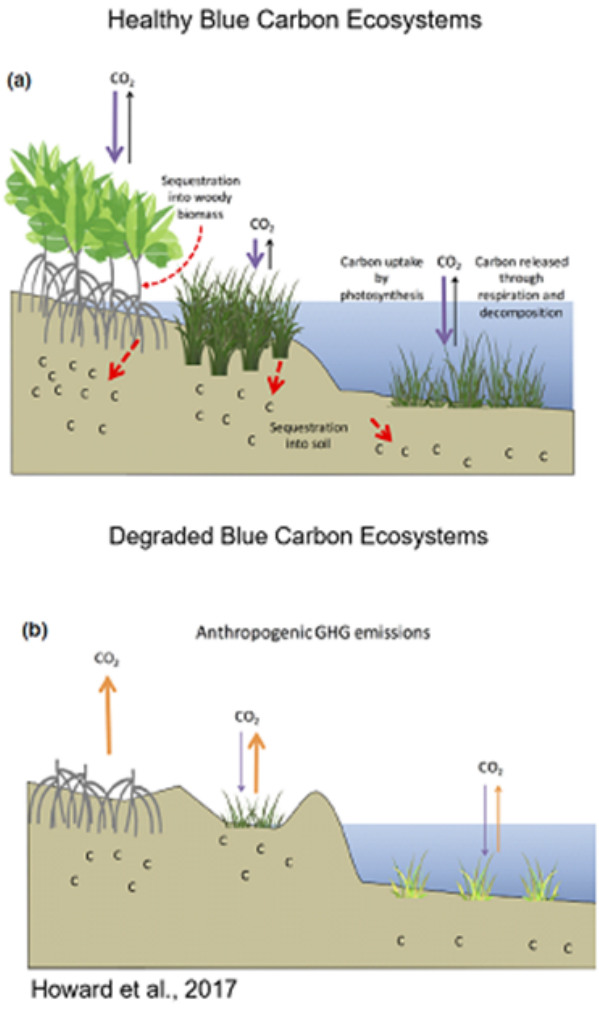
Participants concluded that data availability and coordination are challenges associated with the development of ocean accounting. They emphasized the importance of technical support and, guidance from the international community, such as through ESCAP and the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, to continue to advance ocean accounting.

Interactive Dialogue D : Ocean-climate nexus : blue carbon

The importance of coastal ecosystems in carbon sequestration was highlighted during the interactive dialogue. The first presentation included an overview of blue carbon, a discussion on why it is essential, as well as some policy perspectives, and challenges to blue carbon ecosystems. Delegates emphasized that we need to increase blue carbon monitoring capacity, include blue carbon coastal ecosystems in coastal mitigation strategies such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and act around co-benefits and local community involvement. Participants learned that, when considering the drivers of blue carbon loss, the rate of mangrove deforestation in the Asia-Pacific region has decreased between the 20th and 21st centuries. The research for seagrass and salt marsh was not as established as it was for mangroves, and there were presentations regarding efforts to improve that science base. Delegates explained a seagrass mapping tool for the East Asian region and an excellent monitoring framework for the Republic of Korea (ROK), which includes blue carbon ecosystems into their GHG inventory systems and requires a lot of monitoring and reporting. Other ecosystems that have not yet been classified as blue carbon, such as mudflats, are emerging as a potential blue carbon ecosystem, with great examples emerging from the ROK.

Participants discussed how to integrate blue carbon into policies, referring a number of reports from a variety of sources, including the International Blue Carbon Initiative, Conservation International, the British High Commission of

Singapore, all of which clearly show the potential
opportunities for blue carbon conservation in the Asia-Pacific region, including the commercial sector. A dozen or more blue carbon events are planned around UNFCCC COP26 to further raise the value of blue carbon. In 2021, a number of countries have announced explicit blue carbon commitments in their updated NDCs including a few from the Asia-Pacific region. We can see that several Asia-Pacific countries are moving towards making commitments, whether in the next NDCs or further down the road incorporating blue carbon into their NDCs. The ROK government is setting an excellent example by including wetland categories and blue carbon in NDCs to widen their carbon neutrality approach based on monitoring findings in the GHG inventory.



Howard, J., Sutton-Grier, A., Herr, D., Kleypas, J., Landis, E., Mcleod, E., Pidgeon, E.,Simpson, S. 2017. Clarifying the role of coastal and marine systems in climate mitigation. Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment,15(1),42–50. https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1451

According to estimates, up to 10% of the world's mangroves could be suitable for carbon credit projects, most of those opportunities in Asia-Pacific. Regarding the role of co-benefits and local community involvement, some local communities relying on blue carbon ecosystems may be overlooked if we only view ecosystems for their carbon, as blue carbon ecosystems are central to livelihoods and vital for other ecosystem services. Finally, an eco-champion from Fiji discussed her on-the-ground efforts to minimize plastic pollution, improve mangrove planting, and actively engage people in conserving blue carbon ecosystems. It was highlighted at the end, that in any blue carbon control initiative, the co-benefits and local community involvement must be factored in.

CLOSING PLENARY

In the closing plenary, Ambassador Peter W. Thomson, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, shared his concern about the SDG progress, stating that we are not on track to accomplish 1.5°C global warming, and without strong collaboration between the public and private sectors, implementation of ocean-based solutions, and climate actions we will not be able to maintain a 1.5°C world. Ambassador Thomson underscored that there will be no healthy planet without a healthy ocean and urged that we look for clear science of ocean change in high-level events, including COP26, to take the required steps to address plastic pollution, overfishing, and coastal habitat damage. However, the challenge of climate change driven by human activity is that global biodiversity loss and decline in ocean health are irreversible. He commended UNESCAP for developing the regional decade program and hoped that all stakeholders would participate in and profit from it. He also welcomed everyone to the UN Ocean Conference in 2022.

Concluding Outcomes

All participants in the Fourth Asia Pacific Day for the Ocean agreed that urgent action is required to stay on track to achieve 1.5°C global warmings. Participants recognized the significance of systematic monitoring of plastic pollution to improve management and advancements in technology to detect plastic pollution. However, it is critical to ensure that the data available is easily accessible to all stakeholders. Shipping and inclusive maritime connectivity are vital for global economic recovery following the pandemic, and it can only be feasible with the cooperation and cooperation of all shipping stakeholders, who will ensure that no one is left behind. Safe navigation services, energy efficiency, productivity, and promoting low-carbon shipping and port services are all ways to create sustainable and resilient marine connectivity. Participants also discussed how ocean accounting could be used to demonstrate the real value of the marine environment and the necessity for countries to continue working on it. In terms of blue carbon action, coastal ecosystems meet the criteria for being actionable in climate mitigation policies, and it is necessary to reduce the carbon flux knowledge gap. The region's predicted deforestation rates are concerning, and member states are urged to integrate natural climate solutions in their NDCs.

The Head of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific, Mr. Wenxi Zhu, expressed that the regional decade program is a strong partnership among UN agencies in delivering ocean science, and it provides a framework for all stakeholders to advance the scientific knowledge and partnerships required to achieve a better understanding of ocean ecosystems and sustainable development. He invited participants to actively engage in the regional kick-off conference organized by IOC for Asia-Pacific and a broad range of other regional partners to advance the process for transformative ocean science solutions through a participatory approach and the establishment of a decade action incubator.

AnnMary Raduva, a Fijian youth representative and climate activist voiced her fears and anxieties about the state of the ocean today, urging the youth to give our ocean a voice and to rise to the challenge of fighting for the oceans, on issues such as sea-level rise. She stated that she does not know what climate disaster will occur in 10 years or how our ocean would look and that it is time for better ocean and climate change decisions. She argued that we should devote more time and resources to encouraging action and involving teenagers and young people to harness their passion and develop momentum to meet the challenges of the future.

To conclude the event, the moderator, Katinka Weinberger, asked participants to assess "how confident are you that Asia and the Pacific have the right process in place to sustainably manage its ocean and marine resources" using a dynamic poll feature, and the results showed a neutral majority, with some saying some processes are working and others not, indicating that more work is needed to achieve the goal. The Fourth Asia Pacific Day for the Ocean concluded that by leveraging monitoring technologies, ocean data accounting, improved connectivity, and collaboration, we can build back ‘bluer’ within the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), and now is the time to act.

ANNEX I: Concept Note

Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean

Host: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Virtual

12:00 pm to 14:30 pm (Bangkok time) Wednesday, 27 October 2021

BACKGROUND

On 21 May 2020, ESCAP member States adopted a resolution on "Strengthening cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific," underscoring the importance of the Ocean for the region, and requesting the secretariat "to continue to strengthen current partnerships and to develop new partnerships, where appropriate, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, including through participatory, multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms." [1]

In line with this mandate, the secretariat will host its Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean to continue to support member States, and key stakeholders, through systematic and inclusive dialogue on priority areas and challenges in our region.

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 2021[2]. ESCAP, through its membership in UN-Oceans, supported the preparation process of the implementation plan as mandated in the governance structure of the Ocean Decade, and in par. 4b of the above-mentioned resolution.

OBJECTIVE

Last year, the Third Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean[3] provided an opportunity to collect inputs from a variety of stakeholders in the region for the development of a Regional Decade Program. All inputs received during the event, and through a virtual consultation in anticipation for the event, were duly considered and incorporated in a region-wide program developed in coordination with partner UN agencies.

This year, one of the objectives of the Day for the Ocean is to launch the Regional Decade Program for the consideration and engagement of different constituents that may align activities with this program, or benefit from its outputs. The event will feature a presentation of the program: "Accelerating the delivery of SDG14 in Asia and the Pacific… the science we need for the ocean we want in Asia and the Pacific.". The ultimate goal is to accelerate individual and collective actions in the region, in order to reach Sustainable Development Goal 14 by 2030.

Throughout the Decade, the Day for the Ocean will serve as a regional review mechanism, paying particular attention to a selection of SDG14 targets each year. The scope of these selected targets will be integrated into interactive dialogues for special consideration. This year, the first cluster of SDGs will include targets: 14.1 [Marine pollution], 14.2 [Marine and coastal ecosystems], 14.a [Scientific knowledge, transfer of marine technology].

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[1] ESCAP/RES/76/1 of 21 May 2020.

[2] A/RES/72/73

[3] Meeting report: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/20201215%20Meeting%20Report.pdf

During the event, ESCAP will announce the beginning of the Ocean Youth Champions campaign. As part of the Decade Program, a call for nominations will be organized every year, starting in the 4th edition of the Day for the Ocean.

Furthermore, the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean will provide a regional perspective to inform the Second UN Ocean Conference, tentatively rescheduled for 2022,[4] where ESCAP will participate in the main sessions and will also be hosting side events. Outcomes will also support the upcoming review of SDG14 in 2022.

PROGRAM

The Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean will take place on 27 October 2021 in a virtual modality. With the support of partner organizations, the program will offer a plenary discussion, where the Regional Decade Program will be launched, followed by a selection of thematic interactive dialogues, which will focus on:

a) International cooperation on the digital technologies to monitor ocean plastic pollution (Focus SDG targets 14.1, 14.a)
b) Inclusive Maritime Connectivity for Building Back Better
c) Accounting for ocean and economy linkages: data integration to protect marine and coastal ecosystems
d) Ocean-climate nexus: blue carbon

A keynote speech from a high-level speaker will provide an overview of regional challenges and opportunities for the protection and sustainable development of the ocean. This will be followed by the parallel interactive dialogues. Finally, a plenary session will offer a space to collect feedback from each interactive dialogue, and to share thematic developments.

SPEAKERS/MODERATORS

- Partners of the Regional Decade Program (Ocean Decade)
- Host(s) and partner organizations co-hosting individual sessions
- Experts participating in the discussions, CSOs, scientific community and academia, organizations that submitted voluntary commitments

TARGET AUDIENCE/PARTICIPANTS

- Civil Society Organizations (including the youth and ocean protection NGOs)
- Private sector companies
- Students and staff of educational and academic entities
- Scientific community
- Intergovernmental bodies and regional organizations
- Local and national government

FORMAT

- The event will be hosted virtually. The designated platform, access code and dial-in details will be sent to registered participants 48 hours before the event.
- The plenary sessions will be streamed live via YouTube.
- Participants will be able to choose the interactive dialogue session they want to join. These sessions will be recorded, and links will be shared publicly after the event.

[4] The 2020 United Nations Ocean Conference, which was scheduled to take place from 2 to 6 June in Lisbon, Portugal, has been postponed per decision 74/548 adopted by the General Assembly on Monday, 13 April 2020.

ANNEX II: Program

Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean

Host: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Virtual
12:00 pm to 14:30 pm (Bangkok time) Wednesday, 27 October 2021

PROGRAM

12:00 - 12:40

OPENING SESSION
[Plenary]

- Moderator: Katinka Weinberger, Chief, Environment and Development Policy Section (ESCAP)
- + Promotional video +
- Opening remarks: Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP
- Welcome remarks: Kitack Lim, Secretary-General, International Maritime Organization
- Keynote address: Honourable Toeolesulusulu Cedric Salesa Pose Schuster, Minister for the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Samoa Tourism Authority

[Regional Decade Program Announcement]

12:40-14:00

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUES
[Parallel sessions]

A. International cooperation on the digital technologies to monitor ocean plastic pollution (Focus SDG targets 14.1, 14.a)
B. Inclusive Maritime Connectivity for Building Back Better
C. Accounting for ocean and economy linkages: data integration to protect marine and coastal ecosystems
D. Ocean-climate nexus: blue carbon

14:00-14:30

CLOSING
Ambassador Peter W. Thomson
UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean

Feedback from interactive dialogues (3 mins each):

- **Rapporteur from Dialogue A**:

  Janet Salem, Environment and Development Division, ESCAP

- **Rapporteur from Dialogue B:**

  Sanjam Sahi Guptag, Director, Sitara Shipping Ltd.

- **Rapporteur from Dialogue C:**

  Zeba Ali, Manager of the Regulatory and International Economics Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) / Co-chair, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership

- **Rapporteur from Dialogue D:**

  Dan Friess, Professor, National University of Singapore

Wenxi Zhu

Head of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific

Invitation to Regional Kick-off of the UN Decade of Ocean Science in Asia-Pacific

AnnMary Raduva

Youth Representative (Fiji)

+ Closing video +

Final remarks

Interactive Dialogue A: International cooperation on the digital technologies to monitor ocean plastic pollution

12:40 – 12:50

Opening Session

- **Welcome:** Curt Garrigan, Chief, Sustainable Urban Development Section, Environment and Development Division, ESCAP
- **Opening:** Toru Terai, First Secretary and Alternate Permanent Representative of Japan to ESCAP, Embassy of JAPAN in Thailand
- How measuring and monitoring plastic pollution can build a basis for action plans: Janet Salem, Closing the Loop Project Manager, Sustainable Urban Development Section, ESCAP

12:50 - 14:00

Panel discussion:

5 innovations with the potential to advance plastic pollution monitoring

Moderator: Janet Salem, Environment and Development Division (ESCAP)

- Towards an Integrated Marine Debris Observation System, Nikolai Maximenko, Senior Researcher at the International Pacific Research Center, School of Ocean & Earth Science & Technology, University of Hawaii at Manoa
- Advanced AI and remote sensing technologies to monitor marine debris, Lauren Biermann, Plymouth Marine Lab, International Ocean Colour Coordinating Group, Task Force on Remote Sensing of Marine Debris
- Monitoring microplastics from space, Chris Ruf, University of Michigan
- Nuclear technologies to monitor microplastics, Marc Metian, Research Scientist (Radioecology Laboratory) of the IAEA Environment Laboratories of the Department of Nuclear Applications, International Atomic Energy Agency
- PRISM: an integrated platform to host plastic pollution data, Sabine Strnad, Alliance to End Plastic Waste (TBC).

Interactive Dialogue B: Inclusive maritime connectivity for building back better

12:40 – 12:50

Opening Session

- Moderator: Azhar Jaimurzina, Chief, Transport Connectivity and Logistics Section Transport Division (ESCAP)
- Weimin Ren, Director, Transport Division, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- Xiaojie Zhang, Director, Technical Cooperation Division, IMO
- Shamika N. Sirimanne, Director, Division on Technology and Logistics, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

12:50 - 14:00

Panel discussion:

- Women in Maritime: Leading change and opportunities for inclusive maritime transport, Sanjam Sahi Guptag, Director, Sitara Shipping Ltd.
- Sustainable and resilient port development strategies for leaving no one behind, Kim Changkyun, Director General, Ports and Harbors Bureau, Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, Republic of Korea.
- Ocean Accounting: Integrated the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership to improve maritime connectivity for the Pacific. Ben Milligan, Secretariat Director, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership.
- Inclusive maritime connectivity for the Pacific. Jens Kruger, Deputy Director Oceans and Maritime Programme, Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division, The Pacific Community.
- Cooperation and partnership for the welfare and safety of seafarers. Jan de Boer, Senior Legal Office, Legal Affairs Office, IMO

12:40 – 13:05

Interactive Dialogue C: Accounting for ocean and economy linkages: data integration to protect marine and coastal ecosystems

Opening Session

- **Opening Remarks,** Rikke Munk Hansen, Co-Chair, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership
- **Welcome address,** Taholo Kami, Former Fiji Special Envoy for the Ocean
- Ocean Accounting: Current and Planned Activities, Anthony Dvarskas, Regional Adviser, Environment Statistics, UNESCAP.
- Ocean Accounting: Teerapong Praphatjanaporn, Country Program Lead, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership

13:05 - 13:30

Panel discussion:

- Australia's national ocean account plan and the case of the Geographe Bay Pilot implementation, Crystal Bradley, Assistant Director - Blue Carbon, Ocean Accounting and International Partnerships Section, Climate Adaptation and Resilience Division, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE).
- An economist's perspective on ecosystem valuation, K. S. Kavi Kumar, Professor, Madras School of Economics, India
- Indonesia's whole-of-government approach to ocean accounting, Firdaus Agung, Directorate General for Marine Spatial Management, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia.
- Using ocean accounts to manage the Palau National Marine Sanctuary, Yimnang Golbuu, CEO, Palau International Coral Reef Center, Palau
- Australia's national ocean account plan and the case of the Geographe Bay Pilot implementation, Crystal Bradley, Assistant Director - Blue Carbon, Ocean Accounting and International Partnerships Section, Climate Adaptation and Resilience Division, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE).
- Application of ocean accounts in Thai context, Kanjana Phumalee, Chief of Statistical Standard Group, National Statistical Office, Thailand.
- Linking Viet Nam's ocean accounts with blue economy, Kim Thi Thuy Ngoc, Head, Division of Science and International Cooperation, Institute of Strategy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE), Viet Nam.

Moderator: Mohd Uzir Mahidin, Chief Statistician, Department of Statistics, Malaysia

	Facilitated Dialogue with Attendees
13:30 – 13:55	Mentimeter questions with audience on ocean accounting, Etjih Tasriah, Senior Statistician, Directorate Production Accounts, BPS-Statistics Indonesia, Indonesia
13:55 – 14:00	Session summary by rapporteur Zeba Ali, Manager of the Regulatory and International Economics Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) / Co-chair, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership Closing remarks Ben Milligan, Secretariat Director, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership

Interactive Dialogue D: OCEAN-CLIMATE NEXUS: BLUE CARBON

12:40 - 12:45	Opening Session • **Opening remarks**: Katinka Weinberger (ESCAP-EDD) • **Moderator:** Sangmin Nam (ESCAP-SRO NEA)
12:45 - 13:40	Panel discussion: • The role of coastal blue carbon ecosystems responding to climate change, Kirsten Isensee, Project specialist on Ocean Carbon, IOC-UNESCO • NOWPAP project on estimating seagrass blue carbon in NOWPAP region, Genki Terauchi, Senior researcher, NOWPAP/CEARAC • Mangrove blue carbon in Southeast Asia, Dan Friess, Professor, National University of Singapore • Wetland blue carbon/ ROK national inventory on blue carbon, Sukhui Lee, Project Coordinator, Future Business Development Team, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)
13:40 - 13:55	Intervention from Civil Society, AnnMary Raduva (Fiji), Youth Representative – Mangrove plantation Discussion and Q&A
13:55 - 14:00	Closing

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