



**International Coastal and Ocean Organization (ICO),
Secretariat of the Global Ocean Forum (GOF)**

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Statement of Input to the Preparatory Meeting for the 2025 UN Ocean Conference (UNOC), 2 July 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written intervention on behalf of the [Global Ocean Forum \(GOF\)](#), an international, independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote good governance of the ocean, healthy marine ecosystems, and sustainable development by advancing the global ocean agenda toward sustainable development for the well-being of humanity, in the context of climate change and biodiversity loss.

The GOF was first mobilized in 2001 to help governments place issues related to oceans, coasts, and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development agenda. Since then, the GOF has worked to advance the global ocean agenda, supporting a sustainable development approach focused on healthy ecosystems, coastal peoples, and equity by: 1) promoting the implementation of international agreements related to the ocean, coasts, and SIDS; 2) promoting international consensus-building on unresolved ocean issues, including ocean and climate issues, and improving the governance regime for ocean areas beyond national jurisdiction; and 3) anticipating new ocean issues to facilitate forward thinking policymaking and governance.

Recent and ongoing activities of the GOF highlight support for sustainable development of the oceans and its coasts. These include:

1. Multi-authored Roadmap to Oceans and Climate Action (ROCA) Initiative [reports](#) which are annual/biennial assessments of ocean and climate science, policy, and action
2. [Virtual Ocean Pavilion](#) at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COPs), which aims to promote unity and inclusivity, whilst increasing knowledge,

commitment, and action for the ocean-climate nexus at key events during the meetings of the UNFCCC.

3. Implementation of the Common Oceans Global Environment Facility-funded UN Environment Programme (UNEP) [Cross-sectoral Project](#) which aims to strengthen capacity for cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination in the management and governance of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) among national and regional organizations in the Southeast Pacific and Pacific Islands.

The GOF conducts its work through multi-stakeholder dialogues, policy analyses, capacity building, and public education and outreach. Our [strategic plan for 2024-2030](#) adopts an integrated ocean-coast-land-atmosphere approach, linking the strategies across four focal areas: ABNJ, blue economy, ocean and climate, and integrated ocean and coastal management (ICOM). Our goal is to closely intertwine the achievement of our own strategic objectives with measurable progress towards SDG14 as well as other global goals and frameworks in line with the following ocean action panel themes of the 2025 UNOC:

- (e) Leveraging ocean-climate-biodiversity interlinkages;*
- (f) Enabling sustainable ocean-based economies that leave no one behind;*
- (h) Increasing scientific knowledge and strengthening the science-policy interface for ocean health;*
- (i) Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its implementing agreements;*

The GOF strategic plan recommends the following priorities for action:

- Assist UNFCCC Parties and non-Party stakeholders in integrating ocean-based mitigation and adaptation actions into national and regional policies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (*supports panel theme e*);
- Provide support to countries in the ratification of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of

Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) through targeted public outreach and capacity building (*supports panel theme i*);

- Identify areas of uncertainty and misunderstandings and develop corresponding guidance on standard Blue Economy terminology and practice to facilitate inclusion of Blue Economy in NDCs (*supports panel themes e and f*);
- Strengthen national and regional institutional capacity for cross-sectoral ABNJ management and governance emphasizing ICOM approaches to facilitate implementation of the BBNJ Agreement and developing linkages between ABNJ and Exclusive Economic Zone management (*supports panel theme i*); and,
- Support the development of coherent legal frameworks or updating of existing ocean policies at the national level to incorporate ICOM and new policies and strategies on blue economy, climate change, biodiversity and ABNJ governance and provide for corresponding science, capacity building and public education needs (*supports panel themes h and i*).

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