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OCEAN
ACTION



Bring it All Together for the Ocean

June 2024

Since the first United Nations (UN) Ocean Conference in 2017, the visibility of ocean issues and the UN Sustainable Development Goal for the Ocean (SDG14) has dramatically increased, both within spheres of policy and business, and within the wider public psyche. More funding than ever before, albeit woefully short of what is needed, is flowing towards the tackling of ocean issues and the development of a Sustainable and Regenerative Blue Economy. Meanwhile, ocean science is now receiving greater attention than ever thanks to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).

In the last two years alone, we have seen historical agreements: to commit to protect and [restore 30% of the ocean and coastal areas by 2030](#); to establish a mechanism to manage and protect [Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction \(BBNJ\)](#) also widely known as the High Seas Treaty; [to end harmful fisheries subsidies](#); to develop a [Global Plastics Treaty](#); and to place the ocean in the main domain of UN Climate Conference and integrating it as a priority of the G20 agenda through the [Oceans 20](#). While this all represents tangible global progress, concerted effort is still required to fully conclude these agreements, complete ratification processes, and bring them into force, so that meaningful implementation can get underway.

In the lead up to the third UN Ocean Conference ([UNOC3](#)), to be held in Nice, France, 9-13 June 2025, an opportunity exists to link the content and outcomes of these ocean

events. Without taking away from their respective agendas, the identification of core activation threads will create mutual advantage for all. The challenge is to "Bring it All Together" on the ocean's behalf, so that necessary action proceeds with cohesion and pace. The "asks" collated in this document are for presentation to leaders and society at large, outlining actions that if accelerated, will bring us closer to achieving SDG14.

At the core of these asks are five elements that are relevant to Bring it All Together: (1) mobilizing top political leaders on specific issues and to recognize synergies between ocean priorities (2) prioritizing transparency that enables a better understanding of ocean challenges to better address those related to sustainable management and social justice (3) developing and amplifying cross-cutting ocean dialogues and initiatives from regional to global or across public-private-civil society stakeholders (4) strengthening ocean science to deliver knowledge-based solutions to existing challenges, and starting new realms of science to get ahead of emerging challenges to inform and empower decision makers and (5) unlocking the finance needed to address ocean problems at scale and prioritizing access for local communities and vulnerable groups.

By addressing the asks below, synergizing where possible with existing and new frameworks and agendas, and working across sectors, we can Bring it All Together for the Ocean.



Ocean-Climate

The Ocean is our life-support system and a vital part of the solution to solve the world's most pressing challenges - food security, energy security, peace, biodiversity, climate - and many others.

- **Scale-up ocean-based climate action.** There are effective, science-based, ocean-climate solutions that need to be deployed to meet the global climate, biodiversity and sustainable development goals. *The ask is to invite Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and non-State actors to endorse the [Ocean Breakthroughs](#) as a shared framework for action in five key sectors (e.g., marine conservation, shipping, marine renewable energy, sustainable coastal tourism, and aquatic food) to contribute to up to 35% emission reduction by 2050.*
- **Strengthen the place of the ocean in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).** While a growing number of countries are committing to ocean measures, they are still underrepresented in climate strategies. *In the run-up to UNFCCC COP30, the ask is for Parties to further include ocean-based climate measures in their updated NDCs to deliver on their mitigation and adaptation goals, and clearly specify content and means of implementation.*
- **Reinforce the UNFCCC ocean-climate mandate.** The ocean has been gradually anchored under the UNFCCC and, most recently, its role was acknowledged as part of the world's response to the Global Stocktake. *The ask is for Parties to request a 5-year "Ocean and Climate Implementation Work Programme" to further operationalize the the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA).*
- **Unlock climate finance.** The ocean is part of the solution to achieve the objectives of the Paris agreement and, as such, should be included in climate finance. *The ask is for Parties to support an ambitious finance outcome at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties 29 and to define clear ocean budgets. Additionally, funding from existing bodies (e.g., Green Climate Fund, Global Environment Facility,, development banks, Paris Agreement Article 6, Loss and Damages Fund) should be streamlined, and private finance leveraged, with adequate frameworks and tools, towards marine and coastal mitigation and adaptation needs.*
- **Build synergies across fora:** Better connection among the climate, biodiversity and ocean agendas are needed to ensure coherence and greater efficiency in the actions taken to deliver on global goals. *The ask is for Parties to align their national strategies on climate (e.g., NDCs) and biodiversity (e.g., NBSAPs) and further strengthen synergies between the UNFCCC and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including with the mobilization of non-state actors through strengthened Action Agendas. Moreover, international cooperation across all ocean-related conventions and agreements (e.g., BBNJ Agreement) should be enhanced to ensure a more robust and holistic ocean governance.*



High Seas Protection

Through a multifaceted approach encompassing ecological protection, political collaboration, and enhanced ocean literacy, early implementation efforts within the BBNJ sphere should aim to safeguard marine ecosystems and promote sustainable resource management for the benefit of present and future generations.

- **Protect 30 by 30.** The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) urges to protect 30% of ocean, land and waters by 2030. There is an opportunity for the BBNJ Agreement and the GBF to synergise to accelerate success for both. *The ask is for political leaders to strictly protect 30% of the high seas by 2030. Bypass biases towards data-rich or less human-impacted sites to establish an ecologically representative and connected network of fully and highly protective Area Based Management Tools (ABMTs) such as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) under the BBNJ Agreement for long-term biodiversity conservation.*
- **Cultivate essential political alliances.** Leading nations on BBNJ ratification have an opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the agreement by leveraging the upcoming CBD COP16. *The ask is for BBNJ Champion nations to use this political momentum and forge alliances to accelerate the early implementation of a network of strictly protected MPAs covering 30% of the high seas ensuring scientific robustness, geographical diversity for effective biodiversity conservation, and with*
- robust considerations for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) interests.*
- **Leverage existing or future Area Based Management Tools (ABMTs).** ABMTs have already been implemented in some high seas areas. As such, there is an opportunity to leverage them for early implementation of the BBNJ agreement. *The ask is for contracting parties to collaborate with global, regional, subregional, and sectoral bodies which have already established sectoral ABMTs to explore the potential of those being recognized under the BBNJ Treaty. To collaborate with these same bodies towards the establishment of multi-sectoral ABMTs under the BBNJ Treaty using sectoral ABMTs as starting points (e.g., Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) marine protected areas).*
- **Elevate BBNJ Ocean Literacy.** Effective implementation of the BBNJ relies on relevant parties possessing adequate information on how the treaty interacts with existing frameworks and other instruments. *The ask is for relevant UN agencies and civil society organizations to create a series of educational dialogues to ensure that BBNJ contracting parties and relevant legal instruments and frameworks, as well as global, regional, subregional, and sectoral bodies, possess adequate Ocean Literacy to effectively implement the ratified BBNJ treaty in early COPs. This includes understanding the biodiversity mandate of BBNJ in comparison to other legal regimes and selecting sector-specific ABMTs that align with proposals recognized by the BBNJ agreement.*



Blue Foods

Not all nations have the same impact or opportunities to benefit from sustainable fisheries as well as to scale up aquaculture in a sustainable way, equity and sustainability are two sides of the same coin that need to be addressed jointly.

- **Promote open and effective transparency.** A surge in [transparency initiatives](#) has enabled better science and monitoring capabilities to varying degrees for fisheries management, safety at sea for fishers, fairness in trade agreements, a more equitable distribution of benefits to communities, and improved industry practices to ensure sustainable and ethical sourcing. *The ask is for governments and industry to embrace established transparency initiatives and agreed upon [priority actions](#) for open data that provide equitable and honest insights into compliance in fisheries governance at international (UN agencies), regional (Regional Fisheries Management Organizations), and national government levels, including multilateral cooperation in the high seas.*
- **Push for an equitable distribution of benefits.** Over 3 billion people rely on fisheries and aquaculture as their main source of protein and micronutrients, and over 200 million depend on them for their livelihoods, the majority of them operating in small-scale fisheries (SSFs). *The ask is for governments to establish the enabling policies that will help to scale up financial instruments that are aligned with the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and are directly accessible to coastal communities, with an emphasis on women, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), to establish sustainable harvest and production systems, and to derive maximum economic and nutritional value from supply chain activities.*
- **Strengthen Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) collaborations.** RFMOs are responsible for the sustainable management of most shared straddling or migratory species. The international legal regime for fisheries has grown and evolved significantly over the past century and must continue doing

so. Synergies with emerging governance frameworks, such as the BBNJ Agreement or the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), that have strong global leaders behind them can leverage coordination and accelerate dialogues and actions. *The ask is for these regional authorities to enhance and participate in dialogue with multiple stakeholders, to share existing good practices, identify capacity development needs and strengthen data sharing, in order to identify opportunities to develop new or improved management models under changing environmental conditions and in concert with new governance frameworks to ensure long-term sustainability, equity, and biodiversity protection.*

- **Scale up sustainable aquaculture.** Aquaculture has surpassed wild caught production and has the opportunity to create value for local communities including a unique opportunity for women. As it scales up, it presents environmental challenges associated with land use and biodiversity loss. *The ask is for governments to promote the development of national aquaculture plans that are inclusive and embrace a vision for sustainable and regenerative systems leveraging tools like the [FAO Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture](#) and the [Sustainable Ocean Plans](#) framework. Dedicated efforts should be supported to accelerate and scale up innovative approaches, for example, Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture production systems that represent unlocked potential to deliver concomitantly nature, climate and people positive outcomes.*
- **Get ahead of emerging challenges.** Within blue food production systems, there are emerging challenges, such as potential future unregulated fisheries (e.g., high seas squid fisheries and mesopelagic species) and reducing seafood loss and waste. Such challenges can generate global negative ripple effects to climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity loss if not addressed in a timely fashion. *The ask is for science foundations and national governments to unlock resources to identify these emerging challenges, strengthen the science, elevate the visibility, and develop policy and governance solutions for these issues to help prevent unintended consequences.*



Pollution

Ocean pollution, in its myriad forms, poses a grave threat to marine ecosystems worldwide. From the ubiquitous plastic waste blighting ocean and coastal spaces to chemical pollutants altering water composition and ecosystem functionality. Even with ongoing momentum to develop a global plastics treaty and having a dedicated SDG target (14.1) we are falling short of addressing the full range of ocean pollutants with speed and at scale.

- **Establish runoff limits.** Promoting sustainable farming practices that minimize the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides can support countries to improve soil health, reduce nutrient runoff into waterways, and mitigate the environmental impact of agriculture on ocean systems. However, these actions have to be measurable and realistic. *The ask is for governments to establish specific targets in national food system commitments to reduce hazardous substances and nutrients entering the ocean, and promote the pivotal role ecological agriculture can play in achieving these targets.*
- **Visualize ocean pollution.** Accessible data and real-time monitoring of pollution levels are essential for governments and industries to identify hotspots of pollution and to implement targeted interventions. *The ask is for scientists to create a transparent public platform to visualize ocean pollution that accounts for all aspects of pollution ranging from nutrient runoff, plastics, noise, among others.*

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- **Expand One Health.** The health of the ocean ecosystem directly impacts human well-being through its influence on climate regulation, food security, and livelihoods. The ask is for Member States to advocate for the inclusion of a dedicated section addressing ocean health within the [One Health approach](#) of the World Health Organization (WHO). This will involve collaborative efforts across disciplines and sectors, including marine biology, public health, policy-making, and conservation.
- **Focus on upstream design systems.** The solutions to the plastic pollution crisis are deeply rooted in product design and consumer preferences that, if shifted, could have the largest potential impact to prevent plastics from entering into the ocean in the first place. *The ask is to create space in the global plastics treaty discussions to strengthen the involvement of product designers in order to facilitate subsequent implementation of the treaty and to develop sustainable materials and production processes that minimize environmental impact throughout the product lifecycle.*
- **Unlock political leadership.** By integrating human rights considerations into ocean pollution challenges, political leaders can advocate for the rights of marginalized communities affected by environmental degradation and ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities. *The ask is to create a cross sectoral Ministerial Meeting in the margins of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Bring together Foreign Ministers to focus on ocean pollution and address the intersectionality of environmental issues with human rights, security, and food security, prioritizing strategies for enhanced maritime security, protection of vulnerable ecosystems, and promotion sustainable fisheries management.*
- **Develop and showcase local solutions to a global problem.** Communities in many places have developed pragmatic, locally appropriate and impactful solutions to the ocean pollution challenges that they are faced with. *The ask is that these local groups are provided with the space and opportunity through dedicated side events recognising the role of community led initiatives at relevant events (e.g., UNGA, UNOC etc.) to foster positive, long-term behavior change and significant potential for wider replication.*

About

Bring it All Together is a movement launched by [Friends of Ocean Action](#) hosted by the World Economic Forum, aimed at building on existing momentum and frameworks such as the UN Ocean Decade and others to highlight synergies and critical actions that, if accelerated, will bring us closer to achieving SDG14.

For more information or interest in Bring it All Together, please contact [Erin Skoczylas](#).

