



# HIGH SEAS

Potential and  
challenges



High Seas International Conference



**This brochure is produced by Nausicaá,  
National Sea Centre**



contact@nausicaa.fr

internationalrelations@nausicaa.fr

**In collaboration with the French Agency  
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**Following the 1<sup>st</sup> International  
Conference on the high seas  
held in Nausicaa in June 2018**

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The World Ocean Network

# PREFACE

Imagine a world inhabited by hundreds of thousands of unknown species, driven by currents of gigantic power, where we find sunken mountains, canyons several kilometers deep, submerged volcanoes or even rocky chimneys spewing water at 400°C. This world is the high seas.

The high seas, which cover nearly 50% of the globe's surface, are less well mapped than the surface of the moon! Yet they are essential for human societies. We have long believed that this immense space was invulnerable, a bottomless pit, inexhaustible, without seeing that our activities had an impact on its biodiversity and fragile ecosystems.

Improving protection and management of the high seas is a big challenge of the 21st century. At the United Nations in 2018, the international community decided to open negotiations on the protection of biodiversity in marine areas beyond the national jurisdictions of the countries around it.

It is in this context that the first High Seas International Conference were organised at Nausicaá. These three days brought together diplomats, intergovernmental bodies and stakeholders representing the community, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and the academic world. They exchanged points of view on the issues related to the governance of the high seas, the blue economy, as well as on the legal and institutional issues to come in

terms of marine resources and the protection of its biodiversity. Particular emphasis was placed on raising awareness and mobilizing civil society.

Why in Nausicaá? Because this place is more than an aquarium. Nausicaá explores the links between humankind and the ocean. Nausicaá welcomes several hundred thousand visitors each year, bringing a unique opportunity to deliver a message to them: the preservation of the high seas is everyone's business.

Nausicaá's new space "Journey on the high seas" invites visitors to discover the last unexplored territories of the planet. Thanks to an immersive voyage, the public follows in the footsteps of explorers who set out to discover the mysteries of the open seas. Nausicaá inspires visitors, encouraging us to change our behavior and take action.

The ocean community, and organizations in contact with the general public such as aquariums in particular, have a responsibility to raise awareness on these important issues for our future.

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## INTRODUCTION

The high seas lie beyond national jurisdiction and are therefore a shared responsibility. Despite having been traversed by mariners for centuries, the richness of their biodiversity, vital for the future of human society, is largely unknown to us.

The mid-ocean ridge cuts across the high seas' abyssal plains, reaching up as high as the Alps. Oceanic trenches have slopes steeper than the Grand Canyon. The Mariana Trench is over 2500 kilometres in length and could contain all 8850 metres of Mount Everest. Humankind has only ever ventured there on two occasions: in 1960 and in 2012, when Titanic director James Cameron reached 11,000 metres in depth on board the submersible Deepsea Challenger.

It is pitch black and the pressure levels are the equivalent of one tonne weighing on each square centimetre. And yet, the Mariana Trench can sustain life. Numerous species populate the water column and some extreme ecosystems have been discovered, especially around hydrothermal

vents where the temperature can reach up to 400 degrees.

The high seas also keep the planetary balance in check. We depend on it to regulate the climate and the water cycle. We carry out a whole host of activities there that support our development and our economy such as fishing, transport and communications through underwater cables. The possibilities for exploration, innovation and research are immense.

At present, we have around 250,000 marine species on record. The IUCN estimates that there are 500,000 to 100 million species populating the ocean depths. Their ability to adapt is testament to the high seas' immense biological diversity. Deep-sea fishing is an essential source of protein for humans. And the number of patents stemming from marine genetic resources is growing substantially. These genetic resources are used in chemistry and result in the creation of new medical compounds.

The high seas may appear far away to us, and inaccessible. However, the impact of human activities is on the rise. Overfishing, pollution (especially micro plastics) and climate change are endangering fragile balances and ecosystems. The air and oceans know no boundaries and even land-based activities can have consequences on the high seas. An ocean in poor health poses a direct threat to human society.

In 2018, the United Nations decided to launch negotiations to improve governance of the high seas. One objective for all of the world's countries: reaching an agreement on preserving their biodiversity and using it sustainably.


During the first High Seas International Conference held in Nausicaá, scientists, fishing industry representatives, political decision-makers and journalists compared their viewpoints, shared their latest discoveries and worked towards potential solutions.

The general public has an increasingly important role to play, as citizen and consumer. The protection of marine biodiversity concerns each and every one of us. Civil society must contribute to the debate and Nausicaá has a unique opportunity to raise awareness and educate as many people as possible about the challenges and potential of the high seas.


So, a question: how can the high seas be managed sustainably, and how can everyone get involved?







# VOYAGE INTO THE UNKNOWN



“Not much is known about the high seas. Less is currently known about the high seas than the moon. Significant efforts need to be made to get to know it better and improve our understanding of what it truly means for humanity.”

**Christophe Lefebvre**

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



## AN IMMENSE UNIVERSE

Most people across the planet do not see the high seas as a concern. However, they play a crucial role for humanity. They contribute to the water cycle,

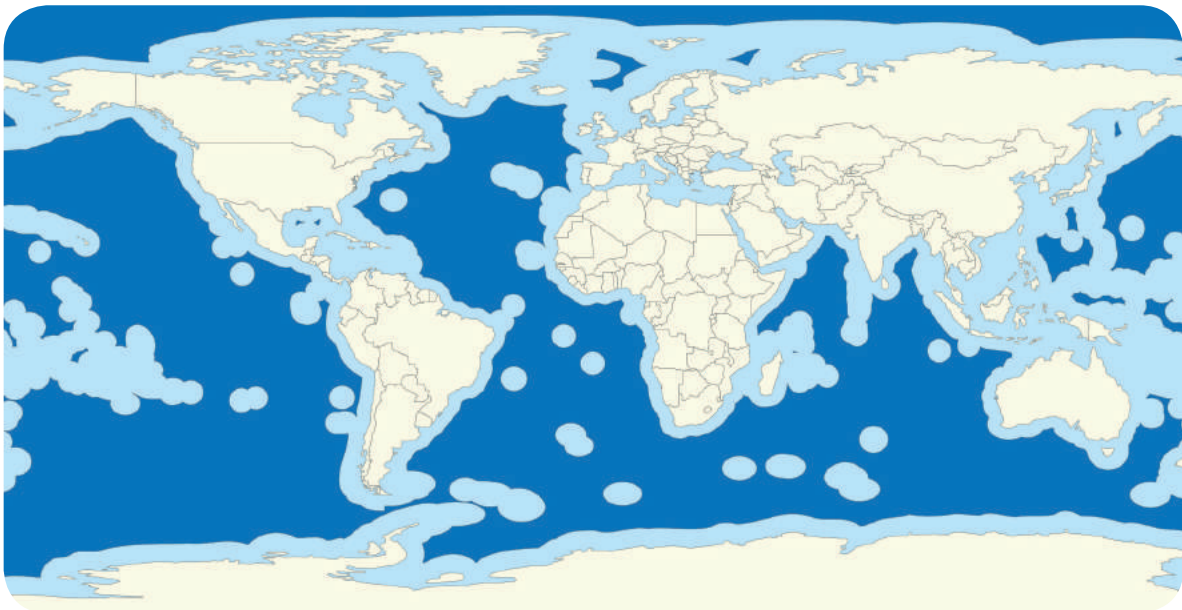
climate regulation, exchange of gas with the atmosphere and maintaining life on Earth, and are a rich resource for humankind.

## WHAT ARE THE HIGH SEAS?

The high seas are the maritime areas that lie beyond national jurisdiction. They are therefore not managed by one single state but are a shared international responsibility.

The seabed is characterised by abyssal plains cut across by oceanic ridges, large trenches and underwater mountains. Their morphology is no less diverse than that of the land surface.

The high seas cover 50% of the surface of the globe and 90% of the volume of the oceans.



■ High seas

■ Exclusive economic zones





## THE PLANET'S LARGEST ECOSYSTEM KEEPS NATURAL BALANCES IN CHECK

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Without the ocean, life could not be sustained. Life began in the ocean and the high seas are home to an exceptional range of biodiversity. The ocean also provides vital services by regulating the world's climate: it is at the root of the water cycle and hosts plankton that produce oxygen. Everything is interlinked: the ocean, the atmosphere and landmass.

The ocean absorb some of the CO<sub>2</sub> present in the atmosphere. A quarter of the carbon dioxide that stems from human activities is absorbed and

redistributed into the water column, pulled along by ocean currents. Phytoplankton contributes heavily to CO<sub>2</sub> absorption. The carbon is stored and deposited at the bottom of the ocean, accumulating among the sediment.

The ocean produces about 50% of the oxygen we breathe and it stores the excess energy caused by global warming.

Keeping high seas healthy is vital for human society.



*Interview***GETTING TO KNOW  
THE HIGH SEAS****Romain Troublé**

Executive Director of Tara Expeditions Foundation

**Tell us about the Tara Foundation.**

The Tara Foundation has been working with the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and international research institutes for 15 years now on microscopic marine ecosystems, which cannot be seen underwater with the naked eye: plankton, bacteria and viruses.

It is crucial to understand what is there, make inventories and understand how the system works; how these organisms can provide so many services every day.

Every other breath we take is thanks to the oceans. CO<sub>2</sub> is captured by the ocean thanks to these ecosystems. They also provide food for fish. It is an extremely important ecosystem for the planet and for mankind. Life began in this ecosystem, and has been evolving ever since.

What Tara and the scientists involved with the CNRS do is to understand this and predict what will happen in the future with climate change and the global impact that humans might have on the ocean planet.

The Tara Foundation produces science, it promotes science, it brings scientists on board a boat, named Tara, but it also shares information, produces educational programmes and regularly speaks at the UN.

**What is the Tara Foundation working on?**


Tara is constantly at sea. At the time of writing (June 2018), Tara is at sea in the North Pacific. We see plastic waste float by from time to time but especially when lowering nets into the water and hauling up the contents.

Under the microscope we see a huge amount of micro plastics that appear to be interacting with marine life, with this microfauna and micro-organisms.


This poses a major challenge; we cannot clean up this plastic. It will end up sinking to the bottom of the sea and washing up on beaches.







# LEGAL FRAMEWORK: PRESENT, BUT INCOMPLETE



“Little by little we have to adopt a new approach based on the international community sharing responsibility for the state of the oceans.”

**Serge Ségura**

French Ambassador for the Oceans





## TOWARDS BETTER GOVERNANCE OF THE HIGH SEAS

The high seas are at the confluence of environmental, social and economic concerns.

Currently, there is a lack of cross-sector coordination at global level as well as between regional conventions.

Paradoxically, the high seas don't belong to anyone but are everyone's responsibility.

On 24 December 2017, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution opening up negotiations in order to develop a legally-binding international instrument covering conservation and the sustainable use of marine diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

### **These negotiations have four objectives:**

- Improve understanding of the impact of our activities on the environment;
- Improve management and protection of vulnerable areas;
- Share the benefits of genetic resources in an equitable manner; and
- Develop training and skills.



## WHERE DO WE CURRENTLY STAND?

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the principles governing the "Area". The Area and its resources are thus the "common heritage of mankind".

Through several conventions, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) strives to prevent marine pollution and helps countries in their preparations and attempts to tackle pollution caused by maritime traffic.

The United Nations Organisation for Food and Agriculture (FAO) sets international policies for fishing together with partners such as the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs).

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) governs use of the seabed.

Finally, the preservation of biodiversity is governed by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). With the notable exception of CITES, these regulations are not binding. Nevertheless, States use them in an advisory capacity.





*Interview***KEEPING COMMON INTERESTS IN MIND****Serge Ségura**

French Ambassador for the Oceans

**What are the threats facing our oceans?**

Essentially they relate to human activity. Humans have always used the oceans from the moment they first found the courage to set sail on them to use them for fishing, for example. Today, with human population on the rise, with the discoveries being made by scientists about the oceans' riches and resources, there is unquestionably a race for human presence which has rather dramatic consequences on their ecological state and on biodiversity too.

**How are international negotiations organised?**

Traditionally, States negotiate in their own interests. When we negotiate on the oceans, some of the matters fall within the competence of the European Union, therefore we are also negotiating within the European framework and it is the European Union that represents the twenty-eight Member States at the United Nations. But gradually we should move towards a new approach based on the international community sharing responsibility for the state of the oceans. From there, we see that State can no longer negotiate by considering its own interests in isolation.

The ideal would be to negotiate by thinking about what is in the interest of the oceans and therefore the whole of humanity.





# IMPORTANCE OF HIGH SEAS FOR HUMAN ACTIVITIES



“They are potentially an extraordinary source of wealth for the future of humanity. This is because on the high seas we find new molecules, new bacteria, new resources and so they are of extraordinary importance. What we need is a system to be put in place that allows them to be used sustainably, ethically and equitably.”

**Philippe Vallette**

General Manager of Nausicaá – French National Sea Centre





## AN INCREASE IN HUMAN ACTIVITY

By 2030, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicts that profits generated at sea will be higher than those generated on land.

The high seas are used for fishing. 90% of the products of international trade are transported across the high seas. Underwater cables are laid there and our telephone and internet communications pass through them.

Engineers are developing technologies to use the incredible power of waves and currents so as to access a renewable and clean source of energy.

Several companies are prospecting amid the great depths hoping to find minerals and rare earth elements that are essential for our technologies.

Finally, an inventory is being drawn up of its biodiversity so as to discover new molecules upon which the medicines and products of the future will be based.

## THE MARITIME ECONOMY IN NUMBERS

5%

5%  
of global GDP

1<sup>ST</sup>

Primary source  
of protein for  
3 billion people

200  
MILLION

Over 200 million  
jobs

90%

Transporting 90%  
of global trade





## BETTER ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF OUR ACTIVITIES

In order to better understand, evaluate and frame the impact of human activities, scientific missions are covering the oceans throughout the world, studying the ecosystems and their interactions.

The data compiled by these scientific missions allow us to determine ways of avoiding, mitigating and controlling damage to the environment with a view to managing living resources more effectively.

Mining activities on the high seas are growing exponentially and oil companies are plumbing ever-greater depths for oil, sometimes reaching deeper than 3500 metres.

Along with the development of these activities come new risks. This is why the negotiations will also focus on the introduction of internationally-recognised impact assessments for activities on the high seas.

In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Member States are obliged to evaluate the activities that fall within their jurisdiction. Article 206 States that, "When States have reasonable grounds for believing that planned activities under their jurisdiction or control may cause substantial pollution of or significant and harmful changes to the marine environment, they shall, as far as practicable,

assess the potential effects of such activities on the marine environment."

The London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes stresses the importance of taking "preventative measures (...) when there is reason to believe that wastes or other matter introduced into the marine environment are likely to cause harm even when there is no conclusive evidence to prove a causal relation between inputs and their effects."

Several regional approaches have also been taken. Article 8 of the Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, on the protection of the environment, requires human activities to first undergo a preliminary assessment according to their level of impact.

The Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (informally called the Espoo) requires cross-border parties to evaluate the impact on the environment of certain activities from the beginning of the planning process.



# MANAGING LIVING RESOURCES

Growing demographics and the increase in revenue is exacerbating the pressure on the oceans and fishing resources.

The FAO, the United Nations Organisation for Food and Agriculture, predicts that 9 billion people will need to be fed in 2050, and food production will have to rise by 70% in 30 years.

*Interview*

## IMPROVING CONTROLS ON FISHING

**Ivan Lopez**

International Coalition of Fisheries Associations  
About Seafood (ICFA)



### What is ICFA working on?

We are taking part in the debate a great deal and contributing with our experience in the domain of fishing. We agree with the conservation objectives and to that end our simplest but strongest proposal is to remain within the areas that are already being fished and to never venture into other areas without supervision or prior scientific approval.

The most interesting projects are mainly based on technologies aimed at controlling fishing, on a voluntary basis, naturally. At the moment, the largest projects we are working on are projects aimed at improving fishing gear in the United States and Canada. This would improve fishing, but also improve the relationship between nets and the sea, as well with the seabed.

### What are your proposals for limiting overfishing?

The fishing industry often believes that the market is the only way of putting all of these policies into practice on our seas.

Why do we think this? International legislation works very well but there is no real "police" in charge of overseeing what is going to be done and what has been decided and so the only way of doing that, especially as Europeans with the largest fisheries markets in the world, is to stand firm and sometimes close off the markets to unauthorised products.

One example was when we banned the "cutting" of shark fins in Europe; this is a good thing and they have to be secured when they are brought to shore to ensure there is a shark and a fin, but on the other hand, the non-European fleets who do not do this are still allowed to sell their products on our markets and that simply isn't fair.









## SHARING THE ADVANTAGES THAT COME FROM GENETIC RESOURCES

Genetic resources are attracting growing interest and bioprospecting activities are on the rise, due to recent technological progress in observing and sampling the oceans.

At present, 90% of the patents that come from marine genetic resources are held by 10 countries, and 70% of the patents by 3 countries. The challenge will be putting in place a mechanism that guarantees access to marine genetic resources on the high seas as well as the fair and equitable sharing of the advantages associated with their use.



### WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?


Genetic resources are used in the agri-food, chemistry, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics industries.

The number of patents that come from marine genetic resources is growing by 12% per year, whereas we have only been prospecting for them for 20 years.

Over 18,000 new products have marine origins, with over 8,000 associated patents.

According to Ifremer, the rate of molecules of interest is 500 times higher for marine species than for terrestrial species. The loss of marine biodiversity poses a direct threat to genetic resources.

This is why States and those in the private sector using these resources need to take part in conservation and the sustainable use of marine biota.







# PROTECTION AND SHARING

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“Scientists state that by protecting the high seas, we have better chances of preventing the deterioration of the ocean.”

**Hiroko Muraki Gottlieb**

Senior Ocean Governance Advisor of Global Marine and Polar Programme,  
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



## RESTRICTING ACTIVITIES AND TACKLING POLLUTION

Certain marine areas need to be protected, according to the level of environmental vulnerability, sometimes to help with stock replenishment, but also to help to better manage human activity that could endanger ecosystems that are deemed to be too fragile.

The new instrument plans to define the spaces within which human activities could be restricted and efforts to tackle pollution could be stepped up.

The Convention on Biological Diversity recommends that 10% of coastal and marine areas be protected between now and 2020.

One of the challenges is to improve the coordination among the management bodies of protected marine areas, to take into account migratory species in particular.

### *Interview*

## IMPROVING MANAGEMENT OF MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

### **Purificació Canals**

Team leader for the EU Transatlantic Marine Protected Areas Network Project, Chair of MedPAN



### **Tell us about the transatlantic cooperation project?**

The transatlantic cooperation project on marine protected areas is a European Union project that aims to bring the MPA managers together. These managers work on different marine protected areas spanning the whole of the Atlantic Ocean and they aim to promote technical exchanges.

### **What do the management bodies discuss?**

The aim of the discussions is to make marine protected areas management more efficient. In this context, we have selected three different subjects.

One of the subjects is coastal resilience, to see how marine protected areas are facing resilience challenge and how they contribute to the resilience of adjacent territories.

The second subject is based on a migratory species: the humpback whale. How can we exchange between different marine protected areas across the Atlantic with the same individuals and the same humpback whale populations, which migrate from north to south an east to west, regarding the management of those sites?

Finally, the third example of cooperation is through the networks of managers that already exist, in particular the regional networks like the Mediterranean, West Africa, the Caribbean and North America, as well as two national networks: the French Agency for Biodiversity (AFB), representing France and the 'Biodiversidad' foundation in the case of Spain.



## SOME EXAMPLES OF PROTECTION AT SEA

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Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are defined as areas at sea and their aim is to protect nature in the long term. They reconcile the objectives of protection and sustainable economic development. More often than not, multiple human activities such as tourism and fishing take place there.

Various initiatives are being established by international organisations and scientists to identify, report, manage and protect areas of ecological interest on the high seas.

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) thus adopted a series of scientific criteria making it possible to identify ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, known as "EBSA criteria". The identification criteria take into account the rarity of species, their vulnerability and fragility and even the biological diversity of the area in question. They aim to inform parties and international organisations on potential management measures.

The International Maritime Organization defines particularly sensitive sea areas (PSSAs) which meet ecological criteria, socio-economic criteria as well as to scientific and educational criteria. Strict measures for controlling maritime traffic may be adopted, especially in the field of discharging wastewater.

Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) are defined by scientists as "discrete portions of habitat, important to marine mammal species that have the potential to be delineated and managed for conservation".

Regional seas conventions have action plans in place to preserve the marine environment in several regions of the world, covering a large range of subjects from pollution from ships or coastlines through to the conservation of species and marine ecosystems. OSPAR (North-East Atlantic) and CCALMR (Antarctic) are the first conventions to designate protected areas on the high seas.





*Interview*

# A RANGE OF TOOLS FOR PROTECTION

**Christophe Lefebvre**

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

**What tools can be put in place to manage marine protected areas?**

There are different types of tools that can be used to manage the sea. Firstly, it must be ensured that professionals, who make use of the sea, fishermen in particular, understand the role they have to play in establishing marine protected areas. Their role in managing marine protected areas starts at the point at which they realise that it is not only vital to reconstitute depleted fish stocks but also to protect biodiversity.

This is why we often speak of governance in sea management policies, because governance means bringing together different stakeholders

to find a consensus about the best management method to choose.

There are different levels of protection which can be adapted according to what is at stake. If the stakes are of an economic nature, then the approach will have to be much more geared towards the type of management tools for reconstituting fish stocks. If there is extraordinary biodiversity, then clearly we need to move towards very strict and regulated protection measures and therefore obviously a very different notion of protection.

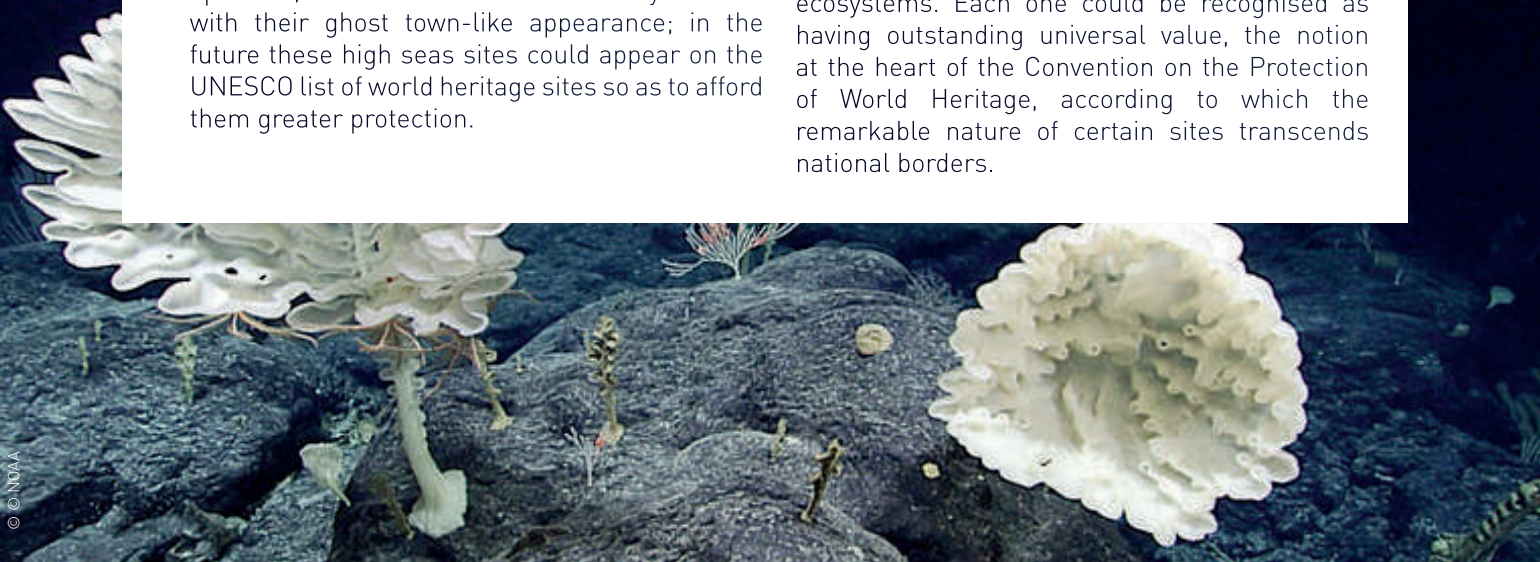


## PROTECTING EXCEPTIONAL SITES ON THE HIGH SEAS

Deep sea corals, floating algae forests on the open sea, underwater volcanoes or rocky seabeds with their ghost town-like appearance; in the future these high seas sites could appear on the UNESCO list of world heritage sites so as to afford them greater protection.

Up to now, only States are able to suggest sites for inclusion on the list. As we know, the high seas are not subject to the national jurisdiction of any one state. And yet they are exposed to threats such as pollution, the deterioration of the deep ocean and overfishing. The UNESCO Convention could therefore be adapted so as to include exceptional sites on the high seas.

Five sites have been identified by UNESCO. They illustrate the exceptional nature of the high seas' ecosystems. Each one could be recognised as having outstanding universal value, the notion at the heart of the Convention on the Protection of World Heritage, according to which the remarkable nature of certain sites transcends national borders.



# Interview

## HIGH SEAS AND UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

**Robbert Casier**

Marine World Heritage Programme, UNESCO



### How many marine sites are on the UNESCO list?

There are currently 49 marine sites on UNESCO's marine heritage list, which includes two sites in France, for example, the Gulf of Porto: Calanche of Piana, Gulf of Girolata, Scandola Reserve in Corsica and the Lagoons of New Caledonia.

### What is the difference between world heritage marine sites and marine protected areas?

World Heritage sites are recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value – places that are so unique and exceptional that their protection should be a shared and common responsibility of us all. A central difference between marine protected areas and marine World Heritage sites is the international oversight that comes with monitoring, evaluation and reporting obligations for the latter. To ensure the characteristics that make up a site's World Heritage status will endure all sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List are subject to systematic

monitoring and evaluation cycles embedded in the official procedures of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. Along with the recognition and inscription of an area on the List, the State of Conservation process

is a key value added to the protection of marine protected areas that are globally unique.

World Heritage marine managers share similar conservation challenges and simultaneously hold a wealth of information about good and best practices in managing World Heritage sites. Bringing these success stories together, in ways that make them suitable for replication in other marine areas, is a central part of the work of the World Heritage Marine Programme.

### More information:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme/>





## SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY

Improving the management of the high seas, which falls under international responsibility, requires States to have access to the same knowledge and technology that will allow them to protect and sustainably manage the biodiversity of the high seas.

Capacity building also allows States to develop their expertise and act independently.

It is aimed at States wishing to:

- Implement and respect the future agreement;
- Participate in global and regional cooperation;
- Develop national legislation, public policies and institutional arrangements for the new agreement;
- Undertake scientific marine research and take part in joint research projects;
- Protect marine areas;
- Support national and local efforts towards a healthy ocean and sustainable economy.







# ALL CITIZENS OF THE HIGH SEAS



“We still have a long way to go in terms of public awareness. It is important to know that this concerns us all; we need the support of everyone if we want to ensure a healthy, productive ocean that continues to provide food in the future, as well as playing its major role in climate regulation, of course.”

**Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli**

Director, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea,  
United Nations Office of Legal Affairs



## TAKING ACTION

The protection of the high seas concerns all of us, whether we work with the sea or not. Every citizen can contribute. But still, to take action, we need to be informed. For a long time, the focus of issues concerning marine life was the coast. But it is essential today to talk about the high seas, a world still so far from the concerns of the citizens and yet so important for the planet.

By getting informed and think about the issues, citizens have the opportunity to make choices and take action. Mobilising the general public will help influence policy, take action on global warming and the benefit equitably from the opportunities offered by the ocean and preserve it for future generations.



## Interview

# THE MAIN ISSUE FOR THE HIGH SEAS IS THAT OF KNOWLEDGE

**Catherine Chabaud**  
Navigator and journalist



### What role can consumers play to address the deteriorating state of the oceans?

As consumers, citizens have a pivotal role when it comes to the future of the ocean, its management and the health of marine and coastal ecosystems, that they don't even know about. They can avoid dropping litter, for example. By sorting waste, they can help avoid waste going in the wrong bin, not being recycled and ending up in the sea, as is currently often the case.

There is a real challenge in reducing the impact of climate change on our oceans. The ocean serves to regulate the climate. We must implement public policies to respond to climate issues, and include the ocean, too.

People could opt for an organic sunscreen rather than the usual chemical-laden cream. They could stop dropping litter on the beach. When eating

fish, they could choose "responsibly sourced" fish, following the advice of Mr.Goodfish and choosing to eat local, seasonal species of fish. It is not always easy to do and that's why Mr.Goodfish's recommendations are so good and so relevant.

Citizens have a much more important role to play than they think, even when they live up in the mountains.

The impact on the ocean starts up at mountain summits and extends right down to the high seas. There is the catchment basin notion which means we are all concerned by the future of the oceans, even mountain dwellers.

### How can we raise awareness about these issues among the public at large?

First I think we need to help people think about what they want, what they care about and dream about. There are many ways do this: documentaries, feature films, and so on.

I raise awareness in my own way. Today, I feel I want to share my personal conviction that the ocean is a common good.

That is going to be the cause I will champion over the next few years, because if tomorrow the ocean

is to be recognised as the common heritage of mankind, then that needs to happen at the level of the United Nations.

I will play my role as an evangelist, to go and convince citizens that this concept is highly relevant as well as calling upon heads of state, negotiators, business leaders, and others.





# VOYAGE EN HAUTE MER

## JOURNEY ON THE HIGH SEAS



## THE 1<sup>ST</sup> HIGH SEAS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT NAUSICAA

Nausicaá, the French National Sea Centre, organised the 1<sup>st</sup> High Seas International Conferences with a view to raising public awareness and mobilising civil society about the challenges and promise held by the high seas. The High Seas International Conferences, the first of their kind, were held between 26 and 28 June 2018. Nausicaá aims to organise such meetings on a regular basis.

The 1<sup>st</sup> conference was organised jointly with the French Biodiversity Agency (AFB), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI), the United Nations Global Ocean Forum, the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), the World Ocean Network and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

*Interview***AQUARIUMS:  
A PLACE FOR DISCUSSION  
ABOUT THE HIGH SEAS****Philippe Vallette**

General Manager of Nausicaa – National Sea Centre

**Tell us about Nausicaà and the reason for organizing the 1<sup>st</sup> High Seas International Conferences**

In 2018, Nausicaá opened an extension that takes the high seas as its topic. Nausicaá is more than an aquarium. Nausicaá is interested in the links between humans and the ocean. And this is precisely the topic into which we are trying to breathe new life.

The idea is to organise this event regularly here at Nausicaá, linked to the negotiations taking place at the United Nations on the governance of the high seas. Therefore all of this is very closely linked. Nausicaá has a role in tourism and economic development and a role as an educator and stakeholder.

**What were the initial outcomes of these 1<sup>st</sup> conferences?**

Firstly, it was a very international conference with participants hailing from a great many countries. And then we saw participants' genuine enthusiasm to come to Nausicaá to take part and finally prepare for the discussions taking place in New York. Many challenges were put on the table, from a biodiversity point of view as well as the question of how the high seas could be used sustainably.

The discussions were extremely enthusiastic and conclusive. Just like in the corridors of the United Nations, we saw people having discussions and starting to come up with projects as well as agreeing on the subjects to be tackled.

All in all, it was really very interesting, with great potential for the next edition.





## Interview

# WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE OCEANS!

**Prof. David Johnson**

Coordinator, Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI)



### What will you take from these 1<sup>st</sup> conferences?

The conference brought together some key individuals who will be directly involved in the negotiating process taking place now and over the next few years. There were leaders who chose to take some messages home with them. Plastics are a prime example. People are now much more aware of the impact that plastic has on the marine environment. The fact is that plastics are everywhere and it all starts with the plastics suppliers who need to start looking for possible alternatives.

These 1st High Seas International Conferences allowed us to have more in-depth discussions and to stress just how important it is to raise public awareness, via the media, about the problems facing our oceans and why people should care.

They should feel concerned about the high seas but also the areas under national jurisdiction because I think that the public are not as aware of

ocean issues as they are on other subjects. While there are many problems in the world causing concern, it is important to spare a thought for the oceans too.

A recent study showed that Sustainable Development Goal number 14, which is the specific goal relating to the oceans, is the least taken into account and this shows that we still have a long way to go.

It is important for everyone to know that we are all in the same boat and that we need everyone on board if we want to ensure we have healthy and productive oceans in the future, so that they can guarantee our food security and keep playing their essential role in the climate cycle.





## PARTNERS



### COMMON OCEANS

[www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans/en](http://www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans/en)

The Common Oceans programme has implemented a capacity-building project with the Global Environment Facility and the Global Ocean Forum.



### GOBI

[www.gobi.org](http://www.gobi.org)

The Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative is an international programme that brings together scientific knowledge to preserve marine biodiversity.



### FAO

[www.fao.org/home/en](http://www.fao.org/home/en)

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the United Nations' specialised agency that leads international efforts to eliminate hunger. It deals with issues related to agriculture and fisheries.



### GOF

<https://globaloceanforum.com/>

The Global Ocean Forum is an international, independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting good ocean governance, sustainable development for coastal and island populations, and healthy marine ecosystems.



### IUCN

[www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is a global non-governmental organisation dedicated to the conservation of nature. It brings together States, NGOs, experts and scientists.



### TARA EXPEDITIONS

<https://oceans.taraexpeditions.org/en/>

The Tara Expeditions Foundation, a registered public organisation, implements scientific expeditions to monitor the evolution of the ocean, raises awareness among young people and takes part in negotiations on the governance of the Ocean at the national and international levels, notably through its status as UN observer.



### FRENCH MINISTRY FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

[www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en)

The Ministry represents the ocean at international level with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development.



### ICFA

[www.aboutseafood.com](http://www.aboutseafood.com)

ICFA (International Coalition of Fisheries Associations) is an American non-profit educational organisation working on the consumption and sustainable exploitation of seafood products.



### TRANSATLANTIC MPA NETWORK

<https://transatlanticmpanetwork.eu>

The European Union has set up this initiative to promote cooperation between managers of marine protected areas in the countries and territories around the Atlantic Ocean.



### UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>

Established in 1992, the WHC coordinates UNESCO's activities related to World Heritage.



### DIVISION FOR OCEAN AFFAIRS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA, UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

[www.un.org/depts/los/](http://www.un.org/depts/los/)

This United Nations Office provides States and intergovernmental organisations with legal and technical services. It ensures substantive services to the General Assembly on the law of the sea and maritime affairs.



### APPEAL FOR THE OCEAN, COMMON GOOD OF HUMANITY

<https://oceanascommon.org/>

Campaign run by the French Institute of the Sea and Catherine Chabaud.



### WORLD OCEAN NETWORK

[www.worldoceannetwork.org](http://www.worldoceannetwork.org)

World Ocean Network is an association whose goal is to raise public awareness, encourage it to adopt new environmentally friendly behaviors and promote the transition towards a Blue Society.





**Nausicaá, National Sea Centre, Boulogne-sur-Mer:** more than an aquarium, Nausicaá is a recreational, educational, scientific discovery centre for the marine environment, with a central focus on the relationship between humankind and the sea. Its mission is to support people's discovery and love of the sea, as an element of our lives and source of wealth today and in the future. As catalyst and promoter of the Blue Society, Nausicaá offers a new vision of sustainable solutions for humanity that come from the ocean.

**The French Agency for Biodiversity (AFB):** as a public entity of the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition, the AFB supports the implementation of public policy in the fields of knowledge, preservation, management and restoration of the biodiversity of terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments. It also aims to reach the public to engage citizens for biodiversity.



The high seas lie beyond national jurisdictions. They represent 65% of the ocean's surface and cover almost half the planet. We are all responsible for the high seas. To manage it sustainably and equitably, we need appropriate international governance. Negotiations are underway at the United Nations on an agreement that would allow for the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity on the high seas.

The immense ecosystem of the high seas is essential to our planet's ecological balance. The climate, the water cycle and the composition of the atmosphere are all dependent on the ocean. The high seas also provide essential resources in terms of food and minerals. They represent great opportunities for the future. We are all affected by the decisions that will be made to preserve it so that we can continue to benefit from this vital natural environment.

This booklet is the result of exchanges between diplomats, scientists, representatives of the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the media and science centre professionals on the importance of public awareness and engagement.



[www.nausicaa.fr](http://www.nausicaa.fr)

AGENCE FRANÇAISE  
POUR LA BIODIVERSITÉ  
ÉTABLISSEMENT PUBLIC DE L'ÉTAT

[www.afbiodiversite.fr](http://www.afbiodiversite.fr)



**OFFICIAL SUMMARY**



# **Common Oceans: Why Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Are Essential for People and Planet**

**High-Level Dialogue and Global Media Forum**

*On the Occasion of the Inauguration of the World's First-Ever  
Large-Scale High Seas Aquarium and Exhibit*

**26-28 June 2018**

**NAUSICAA, The French National Sea Center  
Boulogne-sur-Mer, France**

*Organized by the Common Oceans Program through the  
'GEF/FAO/GOF Project on Strengthening Global Capacity to Effectively Manage ABNJ  
(Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction)*



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



Global Ocean  
Forum



Le l'Her est sur Terre



[www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans](http://www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans)

***Common Oceans:  
Why Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)  
Are Essential for People and Planet***

***High-Level Dialogue and Global Media Forum***

**On the occasion of the Inauguration of the World's First-Ever  
Large-Scale High Seas Aquarium and Exhibit**

**June 27, 2018, 9:00am to 4:30pm  
Océan Atlantique Conference Room**

**Nausicaá, French National Sea Center  
Boulogne-sur-Mer, France**

**Organized by the Common Oceans Program through the  
GEF/FAO/GOF Project on Strengthening Global Capacity to Effectively  
Manage ABNJ (Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction)**

**Official Summary**

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## 1. Background

The Common Oceans ABNJ Program, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), works towards achieving efficient and sustainable use of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in the marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) by fostering international cross-sectoral cooperation and information-sharing, increasing capacities to sustainably manage ABNJ, and promoting an ecosystem approach for sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ.

Covering 62 percent of the surface of the oceans, and nearly 95 percent of its volume, ABNJ includes complex ecosystems at vast distances from coasts, making sustainable management and biodiversity conservation difficult, but imperative for planetary survival and for human wellbeing.

The complex ecosystems in the ABNJ are subject to a variety of challenges and threats from human activities in many sectors, from shipping to marine pollution to overfishing, and the list of threats is likely to increase with time. But above all, the seriousness of these threats on the health of the oceans is compounded by the weak implementation of regulatory frameworks and management options and by a general lack of coordinated, cohesive and integrated interventions. Without urgent action, unsustainable management will have devastating results on marine biodiversity, and the socio-economic well-being and food security of the millions of people directly dependent on ABNJ resources.

Moreover, the problems facing the ABNJ are multi-faceted, cutting across the interests of the diverse array of stakeholders, all of whom have different priorities and agendas. These include industries and fishers themselves, artisanal and industrial, conservationists, marine shipping, the Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs), representing the coastal countries as well as the distant water fishing nations. The Common Oceans ABNJ Program plays a key role in building and improving cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder dialogue, engaging high-level decision-makers, and contributing to information sharing and public awareness of ABNJ issues.

As part of planned public outreach activities and exhibits, the Common Oceans ABNJ Project on Strengthening Global Capacity to Effectively Manage ABNJ,<sup>1</sup> in close collaboration with fellow Common Oceans ABNJ Projects,<sup>2</sup> and partners Nausicaá<sup>3</sup> and the World Ocean Network<sup>4</sup> showcased the major issues facing the ABNJ and insights derived through the Common Oceans ABNJ Program at the newly-opened large-scale High Seas Aquarium inaugurated at Nausicaá in May 2018. The meeting brought together high-level experts working on ABNJ as well as media practitioners.

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<sup>1</sup> The Common Oceans GEF/FAO/GOF ABNJ Capacity Project is jointly executed by the Global Ocean Forum and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> Fellow Common Oceans ABNJ Projects include Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity, Sustainable use of Deep-Sea Living Resources and Biodiversity, and Ocean Partnerships for Sustainable Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation

<sup>3</sup> Nausicaá, the French National Sea Center, is the largest marine aquarium in France. The name Nausicaá was inspired by Homer's Odyssey whereby a princess resembling a goddess with the same namesake falls in love with a stranded Odysseus. After staying on the beach for three years, Odysseus is guided home with the help of Nausicaá. The name is meant to evoke a sense of poetry, the sea, and adventure.

<sup>4</sup> The World Ocean Network (WON) is an international association, representing over 400 museums and aquaria around the world, working to raise public awareness about the importance of the ocean for humanity and the impact that our everyday actions can have on the marine environment.

## 2. The Nausicaá Opportunity

This first-ever high seas aquarium opened in May 2018 at Nausicaá, Boulogne-sur-Mer, France. Encompassing 35,000 square meters, this new addition to Nausicaá makes it Europe's largest aquarium, highlighting the relationship between mankind and the high seas, where visitors can discover this unique marine environment in a fun, educational, and scientific way. The new building housing the high seas exhibit, built by noted architect Jacques Rougerie, is shaped like a manta ray and contains one of the world's largest aquaria, including nearly 60,000 sea creatures and a large-scale 10,000m<sup>3</sup> capacity tank. Nausicaá's intent in creating the exhibit is to rally the public around efforts to improve the way in which oceans and their resources are managed, with emphasis on the areas beyond national jurisdiction which lie outside the control of any one nation.

The High-Level Event on *Common Oceans--Why Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Are Essential for People and Planet*, took place on June 27, hosted 70 participants and speakers, showcased the major issues facing the areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) as well as possible solutions to the issues, with sessions highlighting: The values and issues surrounding ABNJ; the Common Oceans Program experiences; discussions on solutions to challenges in ABNJ; and global media workshop with media representatives and ABNJ experts. This important event was aimed at building and improving cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder dialogue, engaging high-level decision-makers, and contributing to information sharing and public awareness of ABNJ issues. The outstanding venue of the new Nausicaá exhibit provides heightened inspiration and motivation for the achievement of wise stewardship of the marine ABNJ. The High Level Event was twofold, both exposing and spurring deliberation on the major issues, and examining and drawing lessons from existing experiences related to ABNJ, especially highlighting the efforts of the Common ABNJ Oceans Program<sup>5</sup> aimed at achieving sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ.

### Event Highlights:

- Numerous ABNJ challenges were discussed throughout, followed by possible tangible solutions and ways forward for effectively managing ABNJ, including: importance of science-based evidence, sharing information and data, need for capacity building, threat of climate change and pollution, must build on and promote sustainable fishing practices, need for strategic partnering at all levels to build a stronger ocean community, focus on greater engagement with media.
- Opportunities presented included the forthcoming negotiations, replicating and scaling up best management practices, ensuring a link to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially with the implementation of SDG14, building on momentum and success of various high-level ocean initiatives, including to engage more widely with media.

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<sup>5</sup> The Common Oceans ABNJ Program is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

### 3. Opening

**Mr. Guy Lengagne**, President and CEO of Nausicaá, Former Secretary of State, France

*Welcome to Nausicaá*

Nausicaá started on the idea of mobilizing the business world and the general public regarding the protection of the ocean. It has been established at a time where fish stocks had diminished and it was important to show the need to protect the sea and what the sea provides to humankind. The audience will hear suggestions, from scientists and lawyers, but eventually, the decision will be made by politicians. Therefore, the High Level Event is an important opportunity to convince politicians of the importance of ABNJ.

**Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain**, President, Global Ocean Forum  
*Opening Remarks*

Dr. Cicin-Sain gave opening remarks. On behalf of all the organizers, especially the FAO, the GEF, Nausicaá, and the GOF, a very warm welcome to all, here in this magnificent exhibit on the high seas at Nausicaá.

*Why are we here?*

1. This meeting is first of all about enhancing global stewardship of the oceans, especially those areas beyond national jurisdiction for which no nation has authority or control--Enhancing stewardship on the part of governments and of peoples and groups everywhere. And working with the media, as well, as the interlocutor between people and the wider world.

*A little bit of historical context*

Traditionally, up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world thought of the ocean as limitless, invariably bountiful, and forever resilient. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, new maritime activities came on the scene such as offshore oil and gas development, offshore aquaculture, marine tourism, joined the traditional uses of fishing, shipping, and war, creating conditions of conflicts among uses, decline of resources, and pollution. The conflicts of use, the varying practices of different nations ultimately led to the adoption in 1982 of the LOS, the constitution for the



world's oceans, giving control to nations for nations of 200 Exclusive Economic Zones, with the areas beyond national jurisdiction (which constitute 64% of the ocean) divided into two parts: the high seas (the water column) where users have a variety of freedoms: of navigation, fishing, overflight, scientific research, laying of submarine cables, etc. and the bottom of the ocean—the Area—with the mineral resources of the Area to be exploited as the Common Heritage of Mankind. For the ABNJ, we thus have a bifurcated or dual regime.

Over the last 20 years, in particular, we have gained deep understanding of the central role that the oceans play in the climate system as the major carbon sink. And of the central role of marine biodiversity—the greatest biodiversity in the world, and so many species that are still unknown. We don't yet understand. And the relationship of biodiversity to climate change. At the same time, we have seen many other phenomena affecting the oceans including marine pollution, overfishing, illegal unreported and unregulated fishing, and piracy.

Concerns with the loss of marine biodiversity led to the beginning of UN deliberations on this question in 2004, and for over a 10 year period, UN government representatives tried to grapple with the many dimensions involved in this issue. Quite a bit of conflict among nations which essentially have and still have different



visions—much of the developing world believing that marine biodiversity should be part of the common heritage of mankind, while many developed nations adhere to the idea of maintaining and enhancing the freedoms of the high seas.

In 2015, nations decided to pursue a legally binding instrument and we will hear about the major issues that are being deliberated on. Central questions being addressed include marine genetic resources, area-based management tools, environmental impact assessments, and capacity building and technology transfer, as well as questions related to possible institutional arrangements for governance of the ABNJ.

Thus now at a key point in time, for governments and peoples everywhere to contribute to these central questions and to enhance global stewardship of our common ocean, our marine biodiversity, our planet.

*Main purposes of the meeting:*

1. Expose and deliberate on the major issues

2. Examine and draw lessons from existing experiences with ABNJ, challenges, successes, opportunities. Especially Common Oceans—pioneer investment by the GEF 50 million \$ with much co-financing, 4 projects—tuna project, deepsea project, fishery partnerships project, capacity project.

3. Host interaction between the media and the public and ABNJ experts, something that has not yet happened systematically before

4. And, perhaps most of all, to go beyond the intellectual and the conceptual, and to see and feel first-hand the great creatures—large and small, that inhabit the high seas—the magnificent Nausicaá exhibit on the high seas, the brain child of Nausicaá General Manager Philippe Vallette, who more than 10 years ago in our first joint workshop on ABNJ in Nice, developed the vision to bring to the public, in a very tangible way, the habitats, living organisms, and issues of the ABNJ. Congratulations to all the Nausicaá leaders—Mr. Lengagne, Mr. Vallette, on achieving such a magnificent result through a gigantic undertaking.

We look forward to spirited presentations and discussions.. We hope that the discussions will identify new ideas, new ways of engaging the public imagination and of contributing to the global deliberations

**Ms. Tina Farmer**, FAO, Communication Advisor to the FAO Deputy Director General Maria Helena Semedo and chief technical advisor on the GEF/FAO/GOF ABNJ capacity project

Ms. Farmer presented the main features of the ABNJ Common Oceans program and the linkages to the public and the media. The FAO, GEF and key partners, developed the Common Oceans ABNJ Program to promote sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation across ABNJ. Launched in 2014, the Program (officially called “Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Program”) is made up of four Projects: 1. Sustainable management of tuna fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ; 2. Sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation of deep-sea living resources and ecosystems in ABNJ; 3. Ocean partnerships for sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation; 4. Strengthening global capacity to effectively manage ABNJ. The five-year Program is an innovative, unique and comprehensive initiative working with some 65 partners bringing together governments, regional management bodies, civil society, the private sector, academia and industry. It offers an opportunity to move further by leveraging resources, knowledge and experience from partners to bring about transformational changes. So far, much has been done to strengthen management and improve biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ, but there is still a need to do more. Hopefully, this event will galvanize more action, raise public awareness, and inspire engagement toward greater sustainability in the common oceans.

*To set the scene and raising awareness of the common oceans, a [video](#) prepared by the Common Oceans ABNJ Program was presented.*



**Mr. Philippe Vallette**, General Manager, Nausicaá  
Mr. Vallette welcomed the audience. Nausicaá has first developed its concept around humankind and the sea, focusing on coastal communities. Fifty percent of the ocean is high seas, and the decision of extending Nausicaá to include the High Seas, and launching the new experience was made during Rio+20 in 2012. The high seas are a major stake of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, coupled with climate change (and Nausicaá will open soon another extension on climate change and the sea). Nausicaá regularly organizes international conferences, and now they will be able to organize and co-organize more conferences on the high seas.

**Special Address: H.E. Peter Thomson**, UN Secretary-General Special Envoy for Ocean  
*The Global Ocean Agenda*

*H.E. Thomson addressed the audience via video*

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a pleasure to join you via video today.

I regret not being able to attend this exciting event in person and, as UN Special Envoy for the Ocean, congratulate the organizers—the Global Ocean Forum, FAO and Nausicaá, with the support of the Global Environment Facility, for this topical and timely gathering. This High Seas Exhibit at Nausicaá is an excellent backdrop to emphasize the importance of the common oceans, the nearly two thirds of our ocean beyond national jurisdiction for which no one nation has sole responsibility and which demands our focused attention and action.

To respond to the significant challenges facing the oceans, the international community adopted the universally-agreed Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14), an ambitious global agenda for the ocean aiming to conserve and sustainably use marine resources.



The Ocean Goal seeks to balance protection with sustainable use, to mitigate the increasingly adverse impacts of climate change and ocean acidification, in order to ensure our planetary survival and a sustainable heritage for future generations.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

We have been given an extraordinary opportunity to enhance the responsible management of the oceans and help achieve SDG 14 through the negotiations for a new international legally-binding instrument for the areas beyond national jurisdiction which will kick-off in September.

The areas beyond national jurisdiction, or common oceans, represent highly unique and diverse ecosystems, comprising about 95 percent of the water in our oceans, and used for valuable sectors such as fishing, shipping, scientific research, medicines from marine genetic resources, and so much more.

These major uses of ABNJ are crucial for providing food, income and jobs, contributing billions of dollars to our global economy. At the same time there are prospective uses such as offshore mariculture, renewable energy, and carbon capture and storage to name a few.

And while we have made some major strides in better managing areas beyond national jurisdiction, for example by combatting illegal fishing, they still face major threats including climate change, ocean acidification, loss of biodiversity, overfishing, and pollution.

The business as usual treatment of ABNJ will only magnify these threats, affecting the socio-economic well-being and food security of millions of people dependent on marine resources and associated activities. It is time for real change.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

Oceans are life. As the planet's biggest biosphere, they provide us with half our oxygen and act as the world's largest carbon sink. I believe we all have a responsibility to become ocean stewards. This means better responding to the need for sustainable management and conservation of our common oceans. For this, the media can play a key role in mobilizing and informing the public on ABNJ issues which can appear so far away and remote but which affect us all.

Events like this to bring together the public, media, and ABNJ leaders and experts, as well as the negotiations to create a new legal instrument for ABNJ are needed for the successful and sustainable management of one of the most complex and biodiverse areas of the world. The world's oceans are vital, and bettering the management of ABNJ is a monumental step in the right direction toward healthy and sustainable oceans and for achieving the Ocean Goal.

Thank you for your attention and wishing you fruitful discussions that can pave the way forward for the sustainable use of ABNJ.



#### 4. Session 1: Setting the Scene: The Values and Issues Surrounding Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)



**Chair: H.E. Ambassador Serge Segura**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of France

Ambassador Segura emphasized that everyone has a different understanding of the ocean, economically, scientifically or politically. The high seas and their definition changes depending on the expertise. For sailors, the high seas start at 12 nautical miles whereas they start at 200 miles for legal experts. That adds complexity to the question. Legal experts also base their structure of the high seas on the water column but not the seabed and the underground.

That adds complexity to the question. Legal experts also base their structure of the high seas on the water column but not the seabed and the underground. These parts of the area are covered by the Montego Bay convention. Nonetheless, the biological resources of this seabed and this underground are not part of any agreement and they should be protected as well. Negotiating on the ocean requires to be open-minded and accept different definitions. Echoing President Lengagne, it is emphasized that states are extremely egoistic. It is often forgotten, but during UN negotiations, it creates challenges. France is egoistic. When the ocean and especially the high seas are spoken about, States should be less egoistic, which is very difficult. It is essential because everyone has a role to play. Most of the politicians do not know that much about the ocean and are not interest in the maritime stakes if they do not impact their administrative district. The civil society should raise awareness about the importance of the sea and lead its politicians to feel concerned by the future of the ocean and ABNJ. Some countries have the capacities to know and create management method (sciences, funding, techniques) and it is crucial to build capacity and transfer technology. For the non UN specialist, a side event in NYC is a small event which enables external organizations to complete the negotiation with a different approach. Side events became very special moment and very important moments of these negotiations. Everyone needs to play a role at the international level.

**Dr. David Johnson**, Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative  
*Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction: Why Should We Care?*

Dr. Johnson began by explaining that the special nature of ABNJ is important to keep in mind, taking up a vast space, with unique and sensitive ecosystems and connectivity. ABNJ issues are happening now, and it is important to engage because negotiations are happening at a critical time, as major ecosystem changes and threats are occurring. There are a range of issues and threats such as climate change, higher temperatures, regime shifts of plankton, changes to ocean circulation and ocean acidification to name a few. There are significant uses such as overfishing, IUU fishing, piracy, and different forms of pollution. ABNJ is used extensively for a range of issues such as transport, fishing, cables, scientific research, gas and oil exploitation, as well as perspective uses such as DSM, carbon capture and storage, renewables and aquaculture. Areas that are significant, large dynamic areas, need to be identified and protect areas of this nature throughout Marine Protected Areas. OSPAR is currently putting together some such areas. Being aware of tipping points and when

will human interaction be too much is integral to effective management of ABNJ. UNCLOS can be word soup, and the new implementing agreement could potentially add to that. There are ongoing debates about future policy direction such as data collection, coordination, financial resources, compliance etc. Moving forward it will be necessary to harness new technologies, engage in climate change mitigation, and participate in sustainable food security. The new BBNJ regime will need to address gaps, be viable, be inclusive and equitable, be based on consensus, and enable governments to achieve targets and shape future marine sustainably.

**Mr. Romain Trouble**, Director General,  
Tara Expeditions

*What Our Oceans are Suffering—Climate Change, Marine Pollution, Plastics: The Findings of the Tara Expeditions*

Mr. Trouble described the meeting as a capacity building opportunity, as was done last week in Paris, and as should be done every month around the globe. Tara expeditions is now in the plastic gyre of the North Pacific Ocean, between Hawaii and Portland. The aim of this expedition is to understand the coral reefs, the impact of climate change and how to tackle these changes. It is a scientific expedition, based



on the study of DNA changes, genomics, and microplastics studies. They have done more than 40 sampling in different coral reefs. The high seas play a crucial role in the biodiversity of the ocean, they contain the wider fish stocks and they represent the wider surface for thermic and chemical exchanges with the climate system. Ecosystemic services of the high seas are key to humankind. The increase in temperature of the high seas triggers a stratification of the ocean, hindering exchanges between the different layers of the water column and deoxygenation. Acidification of the ocean increases stress on ecosystems. Finally, plastic can be found everywhere in the high seas and impacts directly the biodiversity. There are two important questions: how to understand better the ocean and how to share this information. Microscopic organisms are key to carbon capture and storage and we realize how much we don't know about the sea, as we have discovered 5,037 species of marine virus and 150 million on new genes. We are the beginning of our understanding of how it works and how it will work. Tara raised awareness during a side event of BBNJ Prep Coms on the topic and the negotiator of the G77 countries came to us and said that developing countries can't sign such an agreement as long as they don't have the technical ability to study these ecosystems. It is crucial to develop capacity building and train developing countries researchers to this science.

**Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli**, Director, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, United Nations  
*Outlook for the Negotiations on a New International Legally Binding Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction*

Ms. Goettsche-Wanli presented on the outlook for the negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), or the BBNJ process for short. Development of a new instrument as soon as possible is the goal, with work and results of the conference being fully consistent with UNCLOS. Negotiations will grapple with topics addressed in the BBNJ package in 2011 which includes marine genetic resources, environmental impact assessments, area based management tools (including marine protected areas) and capacity building and technology transfer. There is currently no cross-sectional coordinating mechanism, which proves a challenge. The negotiations consist of an open ended informal consultative process, informal working groups, preparatory committee, and is taking so long because it the issue complex and highly politically sensitive. Governance

issues, of which cross cutting issues are one, are not mentioned in the package. The preparatory committee outcomes for a draft text of an instrument included non-exclusive elements that generated convergence among most delegations, main issues on which there is a divergence of views, and recommended the convening of an intergovernmental conference. Some of the main issues on which there is a divergence of views include common heritage of mankind and freedom of the high seas, marine genetic resources (whether to regulate access; nature of the resources; what benefits should be shared; whether to address intellectual property rights; whether to provide for monitoring of the utilization), area-based management tools, including marine protected areas (most appropriate decision-making and institutional set up), environmental impact assessments (degree to which the process should be conducted by States or be “internationalized”; whether the instrument should address strategic environmental assessments), and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology (terms and conditions for TMT), to name a few. Regarding the intergovernmental conference, and the length with respect to 2018, 2019, and first half of 2020—the conference will meet for four sessions, 10 working days each, and include broad participation, with every effort to reach agreement on substantive matters by consensus (2/3 majority), with substantive support by UNCLOS. The BBNJ trust fund, which is a special voluntary trust fund established for the purpose of assisting developing countries especially least developed countries, is urgently in need of additional contributions. It is important to note the exciting announcement earlier this year of H.E. Rena Lee, Singapore, as the newly elected president of the BBNJ Process. As an additional note made by Ms. Goettsche-Wanli, there is a World Ocean Assessment 2015, with the next assessment expected to be completed in 2020, including technical abstracts on several important topics accessible to the media.

**Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain**, President, Global Ocean Forum

*The Central Importance of Building Capacity for Understanding and Managing Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction*

Dr. Cicin-Sain discussed the central importance of building capacity for understanding and managing ABNJ. Mobilizing broad networks of people, at both the national and regional leaders as well as assessing the needs and gaps, and regional and national perspectives on ABNJ are key for understanding and managing ABNJ. Needs for capacity vary region by region, and work is being done by the Global Ocean Forum and partners on a global survey to aggregate ABNJ efforts and cross-sectoral workshops to assess these needs. The Forum has also developed communities of practice and is currently developing a policy brief on these issues to be presented at the UN in September at the First Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on BBNJ. It is a new realm, and it is challenging to understand the system, build ocean stewardship, and create new regulation. Outreach with the public and media, and receiving comments on the draft media guide are essential for raising awareness of ABNJ. Countries will need long term capacity, with different countries and regions having different needs; assessment will be necessary for these needs. Approaches have to be tailored to each to each country and region, and be cross-sectoral. It is emphasized that capacity building needs to benefit both people in their own national jurisdictions as well as ABNJ. As far as international prescriptions, there have been several, but there was limited implementation in the past, and more training has been on sectoral matters at the individual level. Discussions so far in the BBNJ process have stayed mainly at conceptual, general level, but are now becoming more detailed. As part of outlining the policy brief, financing is a challenge of building capacity and needs to be tied to a mechanism, and UNCLOS does not have a lot of money. A financing mechanism that is funded to support all aspects of the treaty and especially capacity development is necessary. Also featured in the policy brief is a possible clearing-house mechanism that can help to show what aspects would be useful in BBNJ. Overall, linking the global, regional and national is necessary, and one innovative way to bridge these gaps would be to use the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) approach under the Paris Agreement, so that each nation would have to think about, report, and set goals on how ABNJ affects them. Overall, there are solutions to ABNJ, with capacity building being an essential component to the successful and sustainable management of ABNJ.

**Mr. Philippe Vallette**, General Manager, Nausicaá

*Public Understanding Underpins Wise Management of the ABNJ*



Mr. Vallette discussed the sea center. Nausicaá chose to tackle the challenge of interesting the general public to something as abstract as the high seas. Most of the people do not know what the national jurisdictions are, and the high seas are far away. People are intrigued, but no one knows that there is abundant life in the high seas. It is not empty, it is full of resources which should be exploited sustainably. Nausicaá tells a story, the story of the island of Malpelo. It is a Colombian island with 4,000 meters of deep sea. It's an oasis for migratory species, migrating from Cliperton to Galapagos. The work of Sandra Bessudo in convincing the Colombian government to protect this area brings hope and shows that solutions do exist. We depend on the sea in all our daily life aspects. If the civil society and industry are not convinced of this, then governments cannot be. That is why it is crucial to raise awareness in the civil society.

## 5. Session 2: Tell Your Story: Common Oceans Experiences

**Chair: Dr. Alejandro Anganuzzi**, FAO, Coordinator, Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project  
*The Common Oceans Program: Key Messages for ABNJ Management*



**Ms. Corli Pretorius**, Deputy Director, UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre  
*Toward Area-Based Planning in ABNJ*

Ms. Pretorius gave a presentation on area based planning, with a cross sectoral focus. Together with the ABNJ Deep Seas Project, UNEP-WCMC is testing methodologies for area-based planning, with the aim of developing one standardized approach that will help different parties come together and plan activities for the high seas. This effort has three components: capacity building and knowledge-sharing, data and tools, and governance framework. In relation to this, different challenges and mechanisms associated with strengthening cooperation were discussed, and the importance of bringing stakeholders together and helping all the interested parties and stakeholders to make connections between SDG 14 and all other sustainable development goals, were recognized. Moreover, it was noted area based planning is a tool that can help pave the way forward by recognizing the existing challenging, involving regional and global organizations and capacity development.

**Mr. Ludovic Schultz**, Secretariat de la Mer, Prime Minister's Office, France  
*Challenges in Achieving Concerted Public Action in ABNJ*

Mr. Schultz discussed the difficulties in mobilizing public action, and making public officials aware of ocean issues. Mr. Schultz met difficulties throughout his career, and noticed the public having trouble understanding the sea. Managing wild resources and complex ecosystem is not the same as managing industry, with its many parameters and inputs.



It is difficult to make long term considerations in the short term interest, and even more difficult in the marine setting. The ocean can seem empty and distant, and the complexity or biodiversity of the marine world can seem

unknown. It is only very recently that the public began understanding ocean policy, and if successful results are hoped to be achieved, strong political involvement is needed. ABNJ issues should be both a public and political matter. Nausicaá is so important, because it gives the public an opportunity to see the deep sea and is a step toward the public connecting with the deep seas.

**Mr. Tony Thompson**, FAO Deep Seas Consultant and VME expert  
*Deep Seas Fisheries and Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs)*

Mr. Thompson explained that there are changes in the ocean that are not always seen to the naked eye. One example is bottom fisheries in 2006, which sparked huge discussion and debate. Now there is movement on fisheries in ABNJ. There has been huge response from deep sea fishery management organizations to control deep sea fisheries, to fully embrace the concerns of conservation and put forward a series of measures to try and protect both fish stocks and the bottom environment. These fisheries have identified vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs), existing bottom fishing areas, and areas where there are no existing bottom fisheries. If a State wants to fish in some of these areas, they need to go through a complex process. UNCLOS includes freedom to fish in the high seas, which holds true but is subject to strong restrictions, for example abiding by regulations of an RFMO governing that area. Coming full circle, there has been tremendous change in the last few years regarding the deep seas and fisheries, even if it cannot be seen.

**Ms. Lizanne Aching**, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations and Negotiator for Trinidad and Tobago for BBNJ and other Law of the Sea Processes, New York  
*Trinidad and Tobago—Challenges and Opportunities in ABNJ*

Ms. Aching discussed that as a State Party to UNCLOS, Trinidad and Tobago is committed to its full and effective implementation, and sustainable use and conservation of marine environment & resources. Trinidad and Tobago is actively engaged in the negotiations at the UN aimed at creating a new legally binding BBNJ instrument under UNCLOS. The Marine environment is integral to cultural, social and economic identity in Trinidad and Tobago, but the country is vulnerable due to the unprecedented rate of loss of marine biodiversity and the impacts of unsustainable practices in ABNJ. Challenges in ABNJ include limited research opportunities and marine scientific research due to lack of technology and vessels. There have been increased ABNJ activities happening in Trinidad and Tobago, however greater capacity building and technology transfer is needed for effective management of resources in ABNJ and successful implementation of new BBNJ instrument. Capacity building and technology transfer is needed in several areas such as access to research vessels, enhanced institutional capacity, protected area management, and the need for a clearinghouse mechanism. The way forward will need to include a more integrated approach to ocean management, fostering awareness among stakeholders and decision-makers, creating an overarching global institutional mechanism, strengthening existing entities, and sustained funding.

**Dr. Vishwanie Maharaj**, World Wildlife Fund, World Bank ABNJ Ocean Partnership Project  
*Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation*

Dr. Maharaj presented an overview of the efforts of FAO's Common Oceans ABNJ Project on Ocean Partnerships for Sustainable Fisheries and Biodiversity in the ABNJ, that is funded by GEF and implemented by the World Bank, and how it has responded to the need to overcome the barriers to reform (short term economic losses) and improve the effectiveness of RFMO management arrangements, through partnerships and innovative incentive based tools to improve both the ecological and economic performance of fisheries. The summary discussed how each of the executing partners under the Project is developing a business case with a number of industry, government and other partners taking them through the journey of jointly designing solutions, carrying out financial and other technical analyses and engaging policymakers at the national and regional levels.





**Dr. Shelley Clarke**, FAO Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project Technical Coordinator ABNJ tuna project – shark components

*Other Fish in the Sea: Shark Conservation in the ABNJ*

Dr. Clarke told her shark story and discussed personalizing sharks. Using shark fin as a window into shark populations through auction records, Shelley was able to provide the number of sharks used annually in the shark trade which was three to four times higher than what was thought previously, many of them deep sea sharks. The common oceans project has tagged some sharks, and some have moved more than 2000 km in a month. The message is that if we care about what happens to sharks, we cannot ignore that they are passing through ABNJ, and when Tuna management is discussed, it needs to be in the context of their interaction with sharks. Bycatch, when sharks are caught by accident among tuna and swordfish fisheries, also account for shark mortality. It is important to make sure high seas sharks are not out of sight or out of mind, and that they require international management. Also important is to dispel the cycle of poor data, ambiguous assessments and ad hoc management, and intervene to have smarter data collection and management that is based on science. Better catch reporting and new methods for assessing four populations of sharks and promoting safe release techniques are in the works through the Common Oceans program currently. As an action item, ask

where your seafood comes from, and find out the shark implications of the fishery where the seafood is coming from.

**Mr. Cyrille Barnerias**, Senior Environmental Specialist, Global Environment Facility

*Perspectives on ABNJ in GEF-7*

Mr. Barnerias discussed GEF, which is the financial mechanism for projects linked with pollution and waste management. It is based on a four year cycle, with the new cycle starting in July 2018. G7 Member-States are the main funding sources, they commit to provide 4 billion dollars over the next 4 years. There is one pillar on ABNJ, one pillar on the blue economy and one pillar on the coastal communities. The GEF supports projects working on ecosystems restoration, fisheries management in the deep sea and the capacity building of RFMOs. It renews the strategic capacities of the different organizations and community. It supports data collection of sharing. Another priority is the reduction of IUU fishing and the reinforcement of public private partnerships, and setting up agreements to reduce the harmful subsidies. Companies should be responsible, whether they are fisheries or part of the food chain. Management capacity should be supported, and stakeholders should be connected, from the high seas and the coasts.

## 6. Session 3: Panel Discussion on Opportunities and Solutions to ABNJ Challenges

**Moderator: Dr. William Emerson**, Project Manager, Common Oceans ABNJ Deep Seas Project



**Ms. Christine Valentin**, World Ocean Council  
*Mobilizing the Essential Leadership and Collaboration of the Ocean Business Community*  
Ms. Valentin discussed the business sector perspective. Business is a part of the processes allowing for sustainable growth and ocean protection. The ocean is one interconnected ecosystem, and requires the inclusivity of all stakeholders and the business community. Economic growth is a key driver in developing governance, and it is important to take into account the complexity and fragmentation of the ocean business community. Businesses may have priorities that come before their interest in the

oceans, priorities that come before their interest in the oceans, but it is essential to engage the potential of businesses as a stakeholder in ocean issues. Deploying instruments to grasp data to put in regulations to ensure they are enforced could be one role for business, as there are a lot of gaps. Environmental impact assessments are something businesses know well. Collaboration from the business community in the reduction of ocean users and systems that support and reward no pollution, for example a social license to operate could be another role. Ocean issues are cumulative and cross-sectoral, with new and emerging users including involvement through research and development who may invent additional ocean uses. Most importantly, the ocean business community needs to be engaged in negotiations from the start to understand how they think and where they are coming from.

**Mr. Eric Banel**, Secretariat de la Mer, Prime Minister's Office, France, past chair, Federation of Shipping Organizations, France

*The Solutions to ABNJ and the Contribution of the Blue Economy*

Mr. Banel took the government perspective, and defined himself as a man of the sea who started his career in Boulogne sur Mer. The high seas concept has to be dealt with from an educational point of view to the general public. This event is designed to raise awareness to the public about the capacity being built and about the oceans. We need to create a culture of the sea, to raise awareness of the ocean role in our daily life and the interests of the society in protecting the sea. The high seas are very abstract for the public, but by including companies, the public and a broad range of stakeholders in ABNJ decision making, new perspectives can be evoked. Stakeholders in France made an early decision to develop a participatory method to promote ways of work which are pragmatic based on a permanent open dialogue through instruments or workshops. The economic sector and civil society need to participate, and there are tools that can access the needs of stakeholders. Some instruments are voluntary and others are binding, and economic actors are now being confronted by the discussion of international and national law. Concrete objectives are needed to develop goals that will help to reach objectives regarding ABNJ and the new legally binding instrument.

**Mr. Ivan Lopez**, International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA), Spain  
*Perspectives of the Fishing Industry*  
Mr. Lopez brought an industry perspective by describing the complexity of fishing. Regarding ABNJ, fishing is often in the spotlight, but there is a big problem with the international debate being skewed in one way or another. Fishing is a complicated industry, working in the unknown. There is no holistic approach to solving ABNJ issues, as small but important problems are solved one by one. While politicians are not always great at listening, maybe industry is not hearing. An



extreme solution that industry would support would include concentrating all of the fishing knowledge with RFMOs, who has done well by fishers, as a holistic agency, eliminating any excess agencies. NGOs also play a big role in global fishing decisions, however they do not always coordinate, and need to create a comprehensive plan. It is a complex debate, and life is confusing for fishermen, for example they may be told to eliminate discard, only to be told discard is okay soon after due to an issue in the food chain. How much impact is acceptable is a big question, because the industry wants to fish, but is willing to fish sustainably if it can be done fairly. This acceptable impact level is a social contract, and the center of the debate is not the what, of course industry would like to remain sustainable and preserve the ocean for future generations. The question is how, wading through the many ways to get to the what. Listening to fishermen is important in ABNJ decision making.

**Mr. Alejandro Anganuzzi**, FAO, Coordinator, Common Oceans, ABNJ Tuna Project  
*Enhancing Compliance and Enforcement*

The session two chair presented his take on the topic; *Key messages for ABNJ Management*. To begin, Mr. Anganuzzi shared his thoughts on how IUU-fishing is a big threat to the sustainability to vital species in the high seas, tuna in particular. However, in 2010 there was a big shift in the market resulting from the regulation prevent, deter and eliminate IUU-fishing in 2010 entering into force. Before, the issue was focused on the difficulty of how to intercept these vessels, but now, due to the regulation coming into force, steps can be taken to prevent illegal fisheries to operate. Furthermore, Mr. Anganuzzi underlined that there a process taking place to streamline the compliance process for RFMOs, through the organization of a compliance committee in effort to strengthen and harmonize current monitoring, control and surveillance practices. In addition, it was mentioned that RFMOs are looking at the entire supply chain, and it has become clear the collaborating with the private sector is key in forming a more comprehensive exchange of information between management mechanisms for all sectors. As an endnote, Mr. Anganuzzi that the RFMOs have taken a more holistic approach to fisheries, which is demonstrated in the ongoing progresses in the strengthening management processes in the ABNJ.

**Ms. Safiya Sawney**, Director, Blue Initiative, Grenada  
*Building the Blue Economy: Linking National and ABNJ Initiatives*

Ms. Sawney took a SIDS perspective. While there is no one definition of the blue economy, it could be defined as supporting the sustainable development of the oceans through the preservation of ocean health, and figuring out ways to exploit economic benefits from the ocean in a way that ensures that its environmental integrity is maintained. SDG 14 describes that the blue economy will leverage much needed technical capacity, financing and long-term approaches so that SIDS can meet gaps in food security, environmental management and national development. While there are many challenges with ABNJ such as weak regulation, weak management options, and lack of coordination, there are solutions. There are two solutions: Development of multi-stakeholder



approaches and partnerships, and the centralization of implementation and impact under a regional coordinating hub and center of excellence. Grenada has started to figure out how to create solutions, such as the 'Blue Week' in 2016 to facilitate information and knowledge sharing as well as financing and meeting goals, and a Blue Coastal Master Plan which can conceptually provide a vision for coastal development under the blue economy framework. The future of ABNJ defined by the blue economy is the ability to set a solid foundation for achieving long term impactful management.



**Mr. Herman Wisse**, Managing Director, Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative, Netherlands

*Affective Supply Chain Assurance and ABNJ*

Mr. Wisse brought the market perspective. The market is an important driver for change. The idea that industry cares about responsible management is echoed, as fishing is the livelihood of many, and society needs fish on shelves. The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) includes over 70 companies, includes all actors in seafood supply chain, and has a public/private partnership with FAO. A credible scheme is needed for sustainable seafood, which is helped greatly by FAO guidelines and countries that have signed. Streamlining assurance systems has managed to take away some of the friction between the many stakeholders involved in the sustainable seafood market, to move beyond the tension and talk about real challenges and changes that need to take place in fishery policy. Reflection of 10 years in sustainable seafood shows successes on the part of retailers, fishing companies and NGOs trying to improve, and bridging the gap of the two big drivers in the fishing industry, the governments and markets has improved. It is a challenge that governments are responsible and accountable, and there is only so much an individual company in the fishing industry can do, but by trying to find a combination of private/public partnerships and building off of international agreements, the sustainable seafood market will move forward.

**Mr. Ram Boojh**, Advisor, Society for Environment Education & Development (SEED), Lucknow, India, Former Science Specialist, UNESCO

*Creating Media and Information Literacy about Common Oceans (Video)*

Mr. Boojh provided a transition between the third session and Global Media Forum with a video intervention on media literacy. The need for sensitizing and empowering media both traditional and new media with a critical set of competencies related to issues of common oceans or ABNJ is of great significance in view of the role of media in disseminating scientific information and educating general masses about the unprecedented environmental challenges of the world's oceans particularly the common oceans. The ABNJ issues have not found significant mention in media due to lack of and access to credible information and capacity of media persons to be able to seek information, critically evaluate it and create new information and knowledge for the media platforms. It is heartening however to see wide media coverage of the theme 'beat plastic pollution' in India recently, with mobilization of plastic clean ups, and huge social media surges. In order to bring ocean literacy for all, there is a need to foster media literacy which is closely linked to other types of literacies such as ICT literacy, digital literacy and access to information and knowledge. In this context and in preparation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development -2021 to 2030, there is need for developing ocean literacy communication tools for media right away.

*Questions and answers from the public, participants, and speakers enriched the discussion after each session.*

## 7. Global Media Forum: An Interactive Exchange Between the Media and ABNJ Experts

**Mr. Lambert Wilson**, French Actor/Director and Activist (*video*)

A video message was prepared by the French actor, director and activist Mr. Lambert Wilson on his fascination with the high seas, especially since portraying French explorer Jacques Cousteau in a major film. He underscored the huge potential offered by these valuable resources and the importance of their sustainable management– now, and for future generations.

**Keynote speaker: Mr. James Honeyborne**, Executive Producer for BBC Blue Planet II Series

Mr. Honeyborne joined via Skype and shared his experiences from having filmed and produced the BBC Blue Planet Series II, underlining the wonders of the high seas and the need to ensure their sustainable development. Ensuing discussion between the experts and media underlined the complexity of communicating successfully on the common oceans to the diverse array of stakeholders with a focus on the various definitions of high seas and need for consistent messaging. Generally speaking, there is a lack of awareness about the marine ABNJ among the general public, but also among government officials and other stakeholders. There is a clear need to strengthen and streamline current communications efforts, to build and give voice to a strong ocean community, to communicate clear, consistent and coherent messages and encourage an active interest and engagement in the ABNJ at all levels.

**Moderators: Dr. David Dunkley Gyimah**, Head of the Digital Interactive Storytelling LAB, University of Westminster, and **Ms. Tina Farmer**, FAO, Lead Technical Officer, Common Oceans ABNJ Capacity Development Project

Dr. Gyimah and Ms. Farmer facilitated the *Global Media Forum: An Interactive Exchange Between the Media and ABNJ Experts*, joined by expert panelists H.E. Ambassador Serge Segura, Dr. Shelley Clarke and Mr. Philippe Valette.

## 8. Closing Remarks

**Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain**, President, Global Ocean Forum

Dr. Cicin-Sain gave concluding remarks. Organizers overcame many hurdles throughout organization, but are so excited about the impact that the event will have for the ocean community in regard to ABNJ. The event included an inclusive, diverse group of speakers with varying perspectives. Presentations and interventions were high quality and organizers very much appreciated all of the preparation that went into them. Participants are invited to provide comments on the draft media guide that was circulated during the event to further efforts in conveying the importance of ABNJ through the media. It was such a pleasure to have held this conference in France, a great world leader on the oceans. Very sincere thanks go to all of our colleagues at FAO and at Nausicaá and to Philippe Vallette for his incredible leadership in connecting the world's publics to the oceans.



*The official summary was prepared by Alexis Maxwell, Global Ocean Forum, with many thanks to FAO and Global Ocean Forum colleagues for their contributions and edits, which are very appreciated.*