

Oceans and Law of the Sea

Contribution from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat (“the secretariat”) seeks to contribute to the United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea” (78/69), of 05 December 2023 for the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”. More specifically, in accordance with paragraph 361 of the said resolution, this report will contribute to the theme “*The ocean as a source of sustainable food*” of the twenty-fourth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea.
2. Parties have recognized the importance of protecting the ocean and its ecosystems in the Convention and the Paris Agreement:
3. In the Convention, Parties agreed to protect the climate system (Article 2), defined as the totality of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere and geosphere and their interactions (Article 1.3, Article 4 (d)).
4. In the Paris Agreement, Parties noted in its preamble the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity, recognized by some cultures as Mother Earth.

II. Adoption of and update on the mandate on ocean-based climate action

5. At COP 25, the [Chile Madrid Time for Action](#) 2019, governments recognized the need to strengthen the understanding of, and action on, ocean and climate change under the UNFCCC. COP 25 mandated the first

1/CMA.4 para. 79) continued to strengthen ocean-based action under the process and encouraged Parties to consider, as appropriate, ocean-based action in their national climate goals and in the implementation of these goals, including but not limited to nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies and adaptation communications.

8. Decision 1/CP.27, para 49 welcomed the outcomes of and key messages from the ocean and climate change dialogue in [2022](#) and decided that future dialogues will, from 2023, be facilitated by two co-facilitators, selected by Parties biennially, who will be responsible for deciding the topics for and conducting the dialogue, in consultation with Parties and observers, and preparing an informal summary report to be presented in conjunction with the subsequent session of the Conference of the Parties. Mr. Julio Cordano (Chile), and Mr. Niall O’Dea (Canada) are the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue co-facilitators for the biennium 2023-24.

9. At COP28, in 2023, the outcome of the first global stocktake (Decision 1/CMA.5, para. 180), welcomed the outcomes of and the [informal summary report](#) on the 2023 [ocean dialogue](#) and encouraged further strengthening of ocean-based action, as appropriate.

III. Relevant outcomes from the Ocean and climate change dialogue 2023

10. The 2023 [ocean dialogue](#) was held over two days on 13–14 June 2023 in conjunction with the fifty-eighth session of the subsidiary bodies (5–15 June 2023), Bonn, Germany. The ocean dialogue had 250 participants. The two topics addressed were: first, coastal ecosystem restoration, including blue carbon and second, fisheries and food security. The co-facilitators prepared an [information note](#) in advance that provided the choice of two topics, guiding questions and proposed approach based on consultations with Parties and observers, which took place in March 2023.

11. The 2023 dialogue was aimed at strengthening ocean-based climate action at national level and under the UNFCCC process. [The ocean dialogue](#) offered a vital forum for a) enhancing collaboration, understanding and building ocean-based climate action; b), illustrating needs, opportunities and exchange of more than 250 [case studies](#) by Parties and observers, including on fisheries and food security, thereby underscoring the ocean as a vital source of sustainable food; and, c) highlighting key messages for COP28 and ways forward. The co-facilitators of the dialogue presented the key messages and outcomes at the COP28 opening plenary session.

12. The outcomes of the dialogue highlight the importance of sustainable, aquatic foods to the global carbon cycle as well as the significant positive potential the ocean offers to achieve just transition to renewable sources of energy and low carbon food security. Participants in break out group discussions discussed the guiding questions provided by the co-facilitators on the dialogue topics and exchanged several good practices to highlight their key messages. In the panel discussions, several speakers presented on solutions emerging out of aquatic food systems and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for enhancing ocean-

[Act](#) exemplified legislation supporting adaptive fisheries management in response to climate change.

16. Participants highlighted a shift towards algae-based foods and called for recognition of diverse blue food systems for sustainable and equitable aquatic food production, citing examples from [Latin America and South East Asia](#). Participants stressed the importance of protecting coastal ecosystems like mangroves and coral reefs, recognizing their role as nurseries.

17. **I**

[Zealand](#) and [French Polynesia](#) demonstrated successful models of allocating fisheries to indigenous peoples and community-based natural resource conservation.

Annex 1

Visual summary of the breakout group discussions on fisheries and food security

