

**Oceans and the law of the Sea**  
**Report of the Secretary-General**  
**Part II - Main recent developments relevant for oceans and the law of the sea**

**Contribution by the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on  
Climate Change**

7 August 2015

*The following describes undertaken or on-going activities under the UNFCCC that are relevant for the implementation of specific provisions of the General Assembly resolution 69/245 on Oceans and the law of the sea from June 2014 to July 2015.*

**Summary**

The oceans play an essential role in the climate system and, already at the current level of global warming, climate change has significant impacts on them. According to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): over 90 per cent of the heat accumulating in the atmosphere due to the greenhouse gas effect is stored in oceans leading to their warming and -made CO<sub>2</sub> which resulted

The most important work undertaken in the reporting period relates to the preparation for adoption later this year of the Paris climate agreement, which is expected to provide the foundation for future action on addressing climate change, including on adaptation, mitigation, finance, technology development and transfer, capacity-building and transparency of action. The 2013-2015 review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal of limiting global warming below 2°C above pre-industrial levels addressed key aspects relating to the warming and acidification of oceans and the corresponding impacts on, for example, marine ecosystems, coastal zones, food security, livelihoods and sustainable development.

Other relevant activities aimed at: further strengthening the observation system, including its oceanic domain; continuation of the dialogue between policy makers and the scientific community on emerging scientific information regarding oceans and identification of gaps in knowledge and of future research needs; ecosystem based adaptation and ecosystems with high carbon reservoirs; and loss and damage, including from slow onset events such as sea level rise and ocean acidification. UN-Oceans delivered a comprehensive statement at the opening plenary of 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA).<sup>1</sup>

**Specific activities**

*The 2013-2015 review*

The structured expert dialogue (SED) on the 2013-2015 review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal of **limiting global**

ocean-  
regions and coral reef systems.

ems, such as the polar

*Research and systematic observation of the climate system*  
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