Oceans

The Ocean is intrinsic to our life on earth. Covering three-quarters of the Earth's surface, contain 97 percent of the Earth's water, and represent 99 percent of the living space on the planet by volume.

They provide key natural resources including food, medicines, biofuels and other products; help with the breakdown and removal of waste and pollution; and their coastal ecosystems act as buffers to reduce damage from storms. They also act as the planet's greatest carbon sink.

http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/

UN Conferences

- **UN Ocean Conferences, Nice, France, 9 - 13 June 2025**
  https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025, https://unocnice2025.org/en/
  High-level 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- **High-level plenary meeting on addressing the existential threats posed by sea level rise, 25 September 2024**
  https://www.un.org/pga/79/sea-level/
  https://www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2024/#sealevelrise
- **2024 Ocean Decade Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 10 - 12 April 2024**
  https://oceandecade-conference.com/
- Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, New York, 19-20 June 2023
  https://www.un.org/bbnj
  - Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CTC/Ch_XXI_10.pdf
- **UN Ocean Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, 27 June to 1 July 2022**
  Implementation of Goal 14: Stocktaking, Partnerships and Solutions
  https://www.un.org/en/conferences/ocean2022
  - Outcome document: Our ocean, our future, our responsibility / Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 July 2022 (A/RES/76/296): https://undocs.org/A/RES/76/296
  - 10 questions with Ambassador Peter Thomson (21 June 2022): https://undp.medium.com/10-questions-with-ambassador-peter-thomson-705c70f45413
  - 5 things you should know about the UN Ocean Conference, a chance to save the planet's largest ecosystem (UN News, 27 May 2022): https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1119192
- **High-level Thematic Debate on the Ocean and Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water, 1 June 2021, United Nations Headquarters in New York**
  https://www.un.org/pga/75/ocean/
- **Ocean Conference, 5 - 9 June 2017 (UN Headquarters, New York)**
  https://www.un.org/en/conf/ocean/
  https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=3363
  - Outcome document: Our ocean, our future: call for action / Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017 (A/RES/71/312): http://undocs.org/A/RES/71/312
  - UN News Centre Feature: Humanity at the core as UN readies for first-ever Ocean Conference (22 March 2017): https://www.un.org/tr/desa/humanity-core-un-readies-first-ever-ocean-conference

UN Observances

- **World Ocean Day – 8 June:** https://www.un.org/en/observances/oceans-day, https://unworldoceansday.org/
- World Tuna Day – 2 May: https://www.un.org/en/observances/tuna-day
- International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing - 5 June: https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-illegal-fishing-day
- Day of the Seafarer – 25 June: https://www.imo.org/en/About/Events/Pages/Day-of-the-Seafarer-2025.aspx
- World Maritime Day - last Thursday of September: https://www.un.org/en/observances/maritime-day, https://www.imo.org/en/About/Events/Pages/World-Maritime-theme-2025.aspx
- 2022 - International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture: http://www.fao.org/artisanal-fisheries-aquaculture-2022/en/
- 2021–2030 - International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development: https://www.oceandecade.org/
    - How do we prepare for a Decade of Ocean Science? (17 February 2020): https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/how-do-we-prepare-decade-ocean-science

UN Entities

- Global Issues on the UN Agenda - Oceans and the Law of the Sea: https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/oceans-and-the-law-of-the-sea
- UN Atlas of the Oceans - an Internet portal providing information relevant to the sustainable development of the oceans: http://www.oceansatlas.org
- Sustainable Development Goal 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/ https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal14, https://sdgs.un.org/topics/oceans-and-seas
- UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea: https://www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
    - Sustainable Ocean Initiative: https://www.cbd.int/soi/
    - Marine and Coastal Biodiversity: https://www.cbd.int/marine
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
    - Common Oceans - A partnership for sustainability in the ABNJ: http://www.fao.org/in-action/commonoceans/en/
    - Fisheries and Aquaculture: http://www.fao.org/fishery/en
- International Maritime Organization (IMO): http://www.imo.org
- UN Development Programme (UNDP)
    - Oceans: https://www.undp.org/tag/oceans
    - Ocean Innovation Challenge: https://oceaninnovationchallenge.org/
- UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
    - Oceans and Coasts: https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/ocean-coasts
    - Cleans Seas - Turn the tide on plastic: https://www.cleanseas.org/
- UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
    - The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want: https://www.unesco.org/en/ocean
    - Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission: https://www.ioc.unesco.org/en
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
    - The Ocean: https://unfccc.int/topics/ocean
- World Meteorological Organization (WTO)
    - Oceans: https://wmo.int/topics/ocean

Further information

- UN Library Vienna Research Guide - Maritime Crime and Piracy: http://libraryresearch.unvienna.org/maritimecrime
- IMO Maritime Knowledge Centre Guide: Maritime Facts and Figures: https://imo.libguides.com/MaritimeFactsandFigures
- IMO Maritime Knowledge Centre Guide: United Nations and the Oceans: https://imo.libguides.com/UnitedNationsandOceans
- UNRIC Library Backgrounder: Sea Level Rise https://unric.org/en/unric-library-backgrounder-sea-level-rise/
- UNRIC Library Backgrounder: Plastic Pollution https://unric.org/en/unric-library-backgrounder-plastic-pollution/

Selected UN documents and publications

- **UN documents on "Oceans"** – *click here*
- State of the Ocean Report 2024 (UNESCO): https://www.ioc.unesco.org/en/stor2024
- Trade and Environment Review 2023: Building a sustainable and resilient ocean economy beyond 2030 (UNCTAD): https://unctad.org/publication/trade-and-environment-review-2023
- Connections that matter: How does the quality of governance institutions help protect our Ocean? (UNDP, March 2023): https://www.undp.org/publications/connections-matter-how-does-quality-governance-institutions-help-protect-our-ocean
- Policy Options to Eliminate Additional Marine Plastic Litter (UNEP, July 2021): https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/policy-options-eliminate-additional-marine-plastic-litter
- The Ocean Conference one year on – are we keeping our promise? (UN DESA Voice, Vol 22, No. 6 - June 2018): https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/sustainable/world-ocean-day-2018.html
- Life under Water (Africa Renewal, May - July 2017): https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/issue/may-july-2017
- Our Oceans, Our World (UN Chronicle, Volume LIV, Nos. 1 & 2, May 2017): https://www.un.org/en/issue/382
- Marine Debris: Understanding, Preventing and Mitigating the Significant Adverse Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity (CBD, 2016): https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-83-en.pdf
- The Ocean and Us (UNEP GRID-Arendal, August 2016): http://www.grida.no/publications/1
- Blue Economy - Sharing Success Stories to Inspire Change (UNEP GRID-Arendal, May 2016): http://www.grida.no/publications/70
- World Ocean Assessment (UNEP GRID-Arendal, May 2016): http://www.grida.no/publications/112
- How oceans- and seas-related measures contribute to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Local and regional experiences (DESA, 2014): https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1339Non_recurrent_e_publication_Oceans_final%20version.pdf
- Green Economy in a Blue World (UNEP, 2012): http://www.grida.no/publications/129
- Blue Carbon: The Role of Healthy Oceans in Binding Carbon (UNEP / FAO / UNESCO, 2009): http://www.grida.no/publications/145
- Marine Litter: A Global Challenge (UNEP, April 2009): https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/marine-litter-global-challenge-0

Selected Statements and Speeches by UN Officials

- 'Time to turn the tide, save ourselves from rising seas,' says Secretary-General at High-Level Meeting (SG/SM/22383, 25 September 2024): https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22383.doc.htm
- Secretary-General stresses safe navigation for seafarers anchoring crucial shipping industry 'must not be compromised', marking World Maritime Day (SG/SM/22355, 9 September 2024): https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22355.doc.htm
- Let us salute seafarers 'for their essential work, support their safety', says Secretary-General in Message for International Day (SG/SM/22265, 11 June 2024): https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22265.doc.htm
- Earth's life-sustaining ocean in trouble, Secretary-General Observance Message warns, urging greater action to restore, protect marine, coastal ecosystems (SG/SM/22253, 30 May 2024): https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22253.doc.htm
- Healthy ocean is foundation of life, Secretary-General tells Investment Forum, urges greater focus on sustainable fisheries, clean energy to create blue economy (SG/SM/21972, 4 October 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21972.doc.htm
- Speeding up shipping's voyage to carbon neutrality vital, 'critical to our collective future', says Secretary-General in Message for Maritime Day (SG/SM/21941, 15 September 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21941.doc.htm
- Spare no efforts to ensure new Oceans Biodiversity Treaty enters into force, Secretary-General tells Intergovernmental Conference (SG/SM/21845, 19 June 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21845.doc.htm
- 'Let's put the ocean first', Secretary-General says in Message on World Day, urging all to keep pushing for conservation, sustainable use of resources (SG/SM/21819, 31 May 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21819.doc.htm
- Secretary-General commends parties for their ambition, flexibility, perseverance in finalizing text on Marine Biodiversity Treaty (SG/SM/21708, 4 March 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21708.doc.htm
- Humanity's well-being linked to seas' health, Deputy Secretary-General tells Ocean Summit, calling for global action to stop environmental catastrophe (DSG/SM/1832, 1 March 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/dsgsm1832.doc.htm
- Adopting Marine Biodiversity Treaty 'important step forward' in advancing ocean health for generations to come, Secretary-General tells Intergovernmental Conference (SG/SM/21704, 1 March 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21704.doc.htm
- Stressing rising seas already creating instability, conflict, Secretary-General says Security Council has critical role in addressing devastating challenges (SG/SM/21688, 14 February 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21688.doc.htm
- 'Let's all become the champions the ocean needs', Secretary-General tells Race Summit, calling 2023 year of super action in ending seas' emergency (SG/SM/21663, 23 January 2023): https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21663.doc.htm
- On Convention's Fortieth Anniversary, Secretary-General stresses 'ocean is choking from pollution', calls for false dichotomy between profit, protection to end (SG/SM/21622, 8 December 2022): https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21622.doc.htm
- Healthy, productive sea vital to shared future, Secretary-General tells Ocean Conference, calling for businesses operating in harmony with marine life (SG/SM/21354, 27 June 2022): https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21354.doc.htm
- Apologizing for his generation's failure, Secretary-General tells Ocean Conference Youth Forum they will be essential in reversing worsening trends, rescuing planet (SG/SM/21352, 26 June 2022): https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21352.doc.htm
- Economies would stall without seafarers, Secretary-General says, honouring their professionalism in International Day Message (SG/SM/21348, 24 June 2022): https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21348.doc.htm
- INTERVIEW: 'Deliver the care our ocean needs – together', urge co-hosts of UN conference (7 June 2022): https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/06/1119922

- Amid record sea-level rise, coral reef damage, Secretary-General Observance Message urges collective action to ensure world's oceans are healthy, productive (SG/SM/21312, 7 June 2022): https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21312.doc.htm
- With plastic waste choking seas, coral reefs dying, more effective partnerships crucial to protect marine, coastal ecosystems, Secretary-General tells One Ocean Summit (SG/SM/21139, 11 February 2022): https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21139.doc.htm
- Ride the Rising Wave to the 2022 UN Ocean Conference / by Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN SG's Special Envoy for the Ocean (January 2022): https://desapublications.un.org/un-desa-voice/sdg-blog/january-2022/ride-rising-wave-2022-un-ocean-conference