



**Thirteenth meeting of UN-Oceans  
27 May 2014, UNHQ, New York**

**Summary report**

1. A meeting of UN-Oceans took place in New York, on 27 May 2014, from 8:00 to 9:30 am, in the margins of the fifteenth meeting of the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP) held from 27 to 30 May 2014. In accordance with the revised terms of reference of UN-Oceans, the meeting was convened and organized by the UN-Oceans Focal Point, The United Nations Legal Counsel/Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

2. The following representatives of UN-Oceans members participated in the meeting, either in person or by phone: Ms. Tina Farmer and Mr. Fabio Carocci (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO); Mr. Julian Barbière (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – IOC/UNESCO); Mr. Andrew Hudson (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP); Ms. Julie Ritz (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – DESA); Ms. Sumbul Rizvi (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – UNHCR); Mr. Edgard Cabrera (World Meteorological Organization – WMO). The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS/OLA) was represented by Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Ms. Alice Hicuburundi, Ms. Charlotte Salpin, Ms. Karen Yoo and Ms. Hyun Jin Ha.

**Item 1 – Opening of the meeting**

3. Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS/OLA, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. She noted with appreciation that two new members had joined UN-Oceans since its last meeting in February 2014, namely, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and UNHCR.

**Item 2 – Election of Chair**

4. Mr. Edgard Cabrera (WMO) was elected as Chair of the meeting. Members expressed their appreciation to Mr. Julian Barbière (IOC/UNESCO) for having chaired the previous meeting.

**Item 3 – Adoption of the agenda**

5. The following agenda for the meeting was adopted:

1. Opening
2. Election of Chair
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Inputs by participating organizations of UN-Oceans to the annual report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea

5. Inventory of member organizations' activities and mandates
  - (a) Current state of development
  - (b) Next steps
6. Reports from coordination teams
  - (a) World Oceans Day 2014
  - (b) 2014 SIDS Conference
7. UN-Oceans website
8. UN Atlas of Oceans
9. Statement to ICP-15 meeting on UN-Oceans progress report
10. Other matters
11. Scheduling of next meeting
12. Closing

**Item 4 – Inputs by participating organizations of UN-Oceans to the annual report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea**

6. DOALOS/OLA thanked all entities that had contributed to the first part of the report of the Secretary-General on the topic of focus of the fifteenth meeting of the ICP, which had now been issued as an official document of the General Assembly (A/69/71).

7. DOALOS/OLA recalled that it had sent a request for contributions to the second part of the report on developments and issues relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, and noted that contributions were due by 6 June. Noting the page limitation for the report, DOALOS invited members, as much as possible, to focus on main trends.

8. WMO informed the meeting that it had already submitted its contribution to the second part of the report, while UNHCR and FAO indicated that they would do so shortly.

**Item 5 – Inventory of member organizations' activities and mandates**

9. With regard to the inventory, DOALOS/OLA recalled that, at its twelfth meeting, UN-Oceans had agreed on a Work Programme, which included the preparation of an inventory of organizations' activities and mandates to facilitate the identification of possible areas for cooperation and synergies. Some UN-Oceans members had already provided their input on the basis of the template that had been presented at the February meeting and which had subsequently been amended to take into account suggestions received. DOALOS/OLA also recalled that a conference call was organized on 24 April 2014 to further discuss the inventory, including with a view to facilitating contributions from members.

10. Additional suggestions to streamline and make the inventory more user-friendly were made at the meeting. IOC/UNESCO suggested that from the user and Member States' perspective, it would be useful for the matrix to present a quick overview of the agencies' respective areas of intervention and interlinkages with the work of various UN-Oceans members. Participants agreed that the inventory could go into more detail in defining the types of activities, which would allow the identification of synergies.

11. UN-Oceans agreed that those members that had not yet filled in the matrix would do so as soon as possible. It was also agreed that, as a second step towards the finalization of the inventory, adjustments would be made to the matrix in order to make it more user-friendly. In that regard,

IOC/UNESCO, UNDP and DOALOS/OLA would further discuss a possible format for circulation to UN-Oceans by the end of July.

## **Item 6 – Reports from coordination teams**

### *World Oceans Day 2014*

12. DOALOS/OLA recalled the conference call held on 9 April 2014 during which it and other UN-Oceans members had informed of their planned activities for World Oceans Day 2014. It was proposed that members wishing to have their activities posted on the UN-Oceans website send the relevant information to FAO for posting. FAO noted that it had already posted the information received from DOALOS/OLA on the news/events page of the UN-Oceans website ([www.unoceans.org](http://www.unoceans.org)).

13. DOALOS/OLA recalled that the World Oceans Day 2014 celebrations on 9 June would coincide with the first day of the twenty-fourth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which would also be commemorating the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention. The Secretary-General would make a statement on these occasions.

14. FAO noted that 9 June also coincided with the opening of the thirty-first session of the Committee on Fisheries. IOC/UNESCO indicated that it would be celebrating World Oceans Day on 10 June in Paris through various events, including the launching of a civil society platform in preparation for the 2015 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. UNDP indicated that it had sent information and the relevant links to its activities, including a documentary on tuna fisheries in the South Pacific, in celebration of World Oceans Day. UNHCR noted that it was not planning any particular event at this time on the occasion of World Oceans Day 2014. However, UN-Oceans was informed that 2014 marked the year of the “Protection at Sea Initiative” developed by UNHCR which would culminate with the High Commissioner’s “Dialogue on Protection Challenges” on 10 to 11 December 2014. It was agreed that all information provided on the various activities of UN-Oceans members would be posted on the UN-Oceans website.

### *2014 Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)*

15. DESA stated that it would circulate information on registration for the SIDS conference (Independent State of Samoa, Apia, 1 to 4 September 2014), which would be required for all participants. DESA also recalled the intention of the Conference to provide a platform to launch or showcase partnerships relevant to SIDS, and indicated that several partnerships were already posted on the website. Noting that the host country had expressed its wish for more projects, DESA invited UN-Oceans members to send proposals to that effect through Ms. Julie Ritz. DESA also announced that the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States was organizing a Private Sector Partnerships Forum in collaboration with the Government of the Independent State of Samoa and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce from 30 to 31 August 2014, which would feature oceans-related projects.

16. IOC/UNESCO informed the meeting that the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination would meet on 1 September in the margins of the Conference, including with a view to highlighting the United Nations System’s support for SIDS. DESA indicated that eighteen heads of agencies had confirmed attendance, and that a drafting of partnership briefs, including on oceans and

seas, would take place. It was agreed that DESA would send related information directly to UN-Oceans members, for possible comments on the relevant briefs.

17. WMO informed that it would participate in the Conference and that, with its partners, it had launched a partnership initiative on SIDS as part of the Global Framework for Climate Services. It had also submitted proposals for a side event on weather and climate services for SIDS and a multistakeholder partnership dialogue under the theme Climate change & disaster risk management. DESA noted that the deadline to request side events space was 31 May, and that only one proposal on oceans-related issues had been received so far, from UNCTAD. IOC/UNESCO indicated that it had also submitted such a request for a side event on oceans, tsunami and sea level rise.

#### **Item 7 – UN-Oceans website**

18. DOALOS/OLA expressed appreciation to FAO for its work on the new UN-Oceans website, and noted that further updates of the site were ongoing. FAO informed that UN-Oceans members now had the possibility of posting directly information on news and events on the new website. The events would also appear on the calendar set up on the homepage of the website. Alternatively, members could still send the relevant information to FAO for posting. Members, in particular the new ones, were invited to provide the high-resolution logos of their agencies to be posted on the bottom banner of the website. The UN-Oceans brochure is being updated to bring it in line with the revised terms of reference of UN-Oceans.

19. It was agreed that the updates to the website would be an ongoing process. The meeting also agreed to use the calendar function provided on the UN-Oceans website instead of the “TeamUp” calendar platform which had previously been suggested for possible use. All members were invited to add relevant information on oceans-related meetings to that calendar. It was further agreed that, upon request, FAO would send members a username and password to be able to post information on news and events on the UN-Oceans website.

20. FAO indicated that, while they had been financially maintaining the website on their own in recent years, they would welcome a cost-sharing arrangement as had been the case in the past. It was agreed that a dedicated conference call would be held on the topic.

#### **Item 8 – UN Atlas**

21. FAO noted that it was hosting the UN Atlas portal, which allowed information-sharing with more than 1500 members and users. UN-Atlas was wider in scope than the UN-Oceans website. Migration to a user-friendly system was being considered but funding was an issue. FAO indicated that UN-Oceans members had provided cost-sharing in the past which would be welcome in this case. It was agreed that FAO would present a request through the UN Atlas Technical Committee for consideration by members.

#### **Item 9 – Statement to ICP-15 meeting on UN-Oceans progress report**

22. The Chair recalled that UN-Oceans members had decided to meet on the first day of the fifteenth meeting of the ICP in order to have the opportunity to reflect and provide comments, as necessary, on the draft statement to ICP on the work of UN-Oceans, prepared by DOALOS/OLA and circulated by e-mail prior to the meeting. DOALOS/OLA reiterated the past practice of UN-Oceans to provide a report to Member States at ICP meetings, in the interest of transparency and accountability.

DOALOS/OLA also noted that a report to the ICP was also envisaged under the revised terms of reference for the work of UN-Oceans, upon request by the General Assembly. Members expressed support for the draft statement, which would be updated with a summary of the present meeting's discussions and recirculated to members before its presentation to ICP on Thursday, 29 May.

#### **Item 10 – Other matters**

23. The Chair invited members to share additional information of interest to the UN-Oceans members. UNHCR referred to its "Protection at Sea Initiative" and indicated that it would circulate relevant documents to interested members by email. WMO recalled that it was planning a joint side event with FAO in the context of the present ICP meeting and invited members present in New York to attend. IOC/UNESCO announced that the next meeting of the IOC Executive Council scheduled from 1 to 4 July 2014.

#### **Item 11 – Scheduling of next meeting**

24. With reference to the revised terms of reference, DOALOS/OLA noted that at least one face-to-face meeting at UN Headquarters was required. The present meeting of UN-Oceans responded to this requirement. However, nothing precluded UN-Oceans from convening additional face-to-face meetings and holding conference calls whenever necessary. It was agreed, in that regard, that DOALOS/OLA would set up a poll through the doodle mechanism to identify a suitable date for the next face-to-face meeting.

#### **Item 12 - Closing**

25. The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting at 9:35am.