



**Fifteenth meeting of UN-Oceans
13-15 June 2016, UNHQ, New York**

Summary report

1. UN-Oceans met each day, from 8:00 am to 9:30 am, on 13, 14 and 15 June 2016, at the headquarters of the United Nations, in New York, in the margins of the seventeenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP-17). 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: Mr. Joseph Appiott (the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD Secretariat); Mr. Brandt Wagner (International Labour Organization, ILO); Mr. Stefan Micallef, Mr. Fredrik Haag and Mr. Larry Hildebrand (International Maritime Organization, IMO); Mr. Julian Barbière (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, IOC/UNESCO); Mr. Michael Lodge (International Seabed Authority, ISA); Mr. Andrew Hudson (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP); Ms. Irena Zubcevic and Ms. Ling Wang (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, DESA); and Ms. Heidi Savelli (United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP). 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, Mr. Dmitry Gonchar, Ms. Alice Hicuburundi, Ms. Charlotte Salpin, Mr. Yoshinobu Takei and Mr. Stefan Kuuskne. The following representatives participated, by telephone in the meeting, either in full or in part: Mr. Marco Boccia, Mr. Uwe Barg, Mr. Fabio Carocci and Mr. Dorian Kalamvrezos Navarro (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO); and Ms. Regina Asariotis (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD). A representative from the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), Ms. Catherine Zanev, also attended the meeting *ex officio*.

Item 1 – Opening of the meeting

3. Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS/OLA, opened the meeting, and welcomed the participants.

Item 2 – Election of Chair

4. In accordance with the terms of reference of UN-Oceans, Ms. Irena Zubcevic (DESA) was elected as Chair of the fifteenth meeting of UN-Oceans.

Item 3 – Adoption of the agenda

5. DOALOS/OLA recalled that the provisional agenda was circulated in advance of the meeting, which was adopted as further revised. The items as identified below were discussed in the course of the three-day face to face meeting.

Item 4 – Statement of UN-Oceans at ICP-17

6. DOALOS/OLA recalled that a draft statement had been distributed to all UN-Oceans members in advance of the meeting, the final version of which would be delivered to the 17th meeting of the ICP by the United Nations Legal Counsel as focal point of UN-Oceans in accordance with the terms of reference. During the meetings, comments were received on the draft statement.

7. DOALOS/OLA noted that the statement reflected mostly the implementation of the work programme including references, for example, to the inventory of mandates and activities, exchange of information among members, and participation and organization of relevant UN-Oceans events, as well as the organization of World Oceans Day.

8. UN-Oceans discussed the official launch of the inventory of mandates and activities of UN-Oceans members at ICP-17. DOALOS/OLA proposed that such launch could be made through a short power point presentation and a live demonstration on how to access and search the inventory at the UN-Oceans website. DOALOS/OLA highlighted with thanks that FAO had prepared a short powerpoint on the inventory in collaboration with DOALOS/OLA. FAO further confirmed that there was a link to a pdf tutorial page for use on the UN-Oceans inventory webpage.

9. It was agreed that DOALOS/OLA would conduct a demonstration of the inventory during the ICP-17, preceded by a power-point presentation, on 16 June 2016 under the relevant item on inter-agency cooperation and coordination.

10. Following the introduction of some suggestions and modifications, UN-Oceans members agreed to the UN-Oceans statement to be delivered by the United Nations Legal Counsel as its focal point at ICP -17 (available at www.unoceans.org).

Item 5 – UN-Oceans Biennial Work Programme 2016-2017

11. DOALOS/OLA recalled that it had circulated a draft biennial work programme for 2016-2017 in advance of the meeting and pointed out that the proposed work programme reflected closely as in the past, the terms of reference of UN-Oceans. In addition to the continued development of the UN-Oceans inventory and identification of synergies and areas of collaboration, new activities under the various headings had been included for the consideration by members of UN-Oceans. An exchange of views ensued on the work programme.

12. Noting the launch of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, UN Oceans members highlighted the importance of sharing of information on activities in preparation for, and during, the second cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects.

13. UNDP introduced a new project, “LME:LEARN”, led by UNDP and IOC/UNESCO with funding from GEF. LME:LEARN was a platform for sharing existing and developing new tools to support marine ecosystem-based management. UNDP and IOC/UNESCO pointed out that one of the objectives of the project was to broaden ocean-related knowledge sharing with stakeholders beyond the UN agencies. UNDP and IOC/UNESCO suggested that UN-Oceans members consider participating in relevant aspects of the project and invited those interested to enter into contact with IOC/UNESCO.

14. It was agreed that references to this new project, as well as the second cycle of the Regular Process would be included in the 2016-2017 biennial work programme and that a link to this platform would be added on the UN-Oceans website.

15. Regarding the commemoration of World Oceans Day, it was pointed out that the 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 would be held in Fiji¹, from 5 to 9 June 2017, which would coincide with World Oceans Day (8 June). It was highlighted that Fiji intended to organize celebrations for World Oceans Day during the Conference.

16. IOC/UNESCO noted that they were developing a World Oceans Day online Portal, in collaboration with DOALOS, for UN agencies involved in UN-Oceans and beyond as well as civil society to enable them to share information regarding their World Oceans Day activities. The portal would aim to provide a gate to UN World Oceans Day mobilization. The portal is to be launched by the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14) in 2017.

17. UN-Oceans members agreed that the Conference might also provide an opportunity for UN-Oceans members to prepare a joint celebration of World Oceans Day in Fiji. Such an event, as well as a reference to the establishment of a World Ocean Day portal should be reflected in the UN-Oceans Biennial Work Programme.

Sustainable Development Goal 14

18. UN-Oceans members exchanged views on the recent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG 14 and the adoption of resolution 70/226 on the convening of a United Nations Conference to support the implementation SDG 14.

19. DESA provided some information on the Conference and regarding the establishment of an Advisory Group to the co-hosts of the Conference, as well as ongoing consultations on the General Assembly modalities resolution for the Conference. It was noted that some members of UN-Oceans are also members of the Advisory Group. DESA clarified that the Co-hosts regarded the Advisory Group as an informal group which would provide advice to the co-hosts and would not produce any official output.

20. UN-Oceans members expressed their readiness to contribute to the Conference and its preparations. They noted there was a need for strengthening information exchange with regard to

¹ As of August 2016, it is advised that “The 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”, will no longer be held in Fiji but at UN Headquarters in New York.

preparations for the Conference. UN-Oceans members further noted that, as mandated by their respective governing bodies, they would continue providing assistance to Member States in the implementation of SDG 14, as well as other ocean-related Goals.

21. DOALOS/OLA suggested that, as it had been done at the Paris Climate Change Conference, UN-Oceans might consider holding a UN-Oceans side event in Fiji. Similarly, it was noted that in accordance with the work agenda of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF), SDG 14, among others, would be considered by the HLPF, and that it provided also another opportunity to hold a UN-Oceans side event on that occasion.

22. UN-Oceans members agreed to the inclusion of references to possible joint side events at the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 and the HLPF.

23. DOALOS highlighted that during the period since the last reporting to the 16th meeting of the Informal Consultative Process, UN-Oceans members held consultations on a proposal for an indicator for SDG 14, target 14.c. Target 14.c calls for “Enhanc[ing] the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of ‘The future we want’.

24. The proposal was incorporated into the Final list of proposed SDG indicators of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. At its meeting in March 2016, the UN Statistical Commission agreed “as a practical starting point” with the proposed global indicator framework for the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the indicator proposed by the members of UN-Oceans for target 14.c. DOALOS/OLA noted that UN-Oceans was currently engaged in the development of a metadata for the indicator for target 14.c and recalled that it was designated by UN-Oceans as a focal point for compiling such metadata to be prepared in collaboration with members.

25. DESA informed UN-Oceans that as agreed by the ECOSOC, the list of indicators will continue to be the subject of refinement and improvements as methods and data availability improve.

26. In response to a request of UN-Oceans, representatives from the DESA Statistics Division (UNSD) gave a brief presentation on the “state of affairs” regarding the development of the indicators for SDGs. In its presentation, UNSD outlined the process for the development of SDG indicators by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, including the classification of all indicators into three tiers on the basis of whether or not established methodology and standards and sufficient data was already available to monitor the indicator. UN-Oceans was informed that agencies would be required to develop a work plan for tier 3 indicators, to which the indicator for target 14.c belongs, with a view to submitting relevant metadata. UNSD indicated that a questionnaire on the development of the work plan and metadata for tier 3 indicators would be due for 24 June 2016, while work plans were expected to be submitted to the UNSD by 29 July 2016.

27. UN-Oceans members agreed to the inclusion in the work programme of a reference to the work of UN-Oceans regarding the development of the metadata for the indicator for target 14.c. They also agreed on the final 2016-2017 Biennial Work Programme (available as annexed to the UN-Oceans statement to the seventeenth meeting of ICP).

Item 6 – Identification of synergies and areas of collaboration

28. DOALOS/OLA recalled that the General Assembly would be reviewing the terms of reference of UN-Oceans at its 72nd session. DOALOS/OLA noted that the report to assist Member States in their review would provide UN-Oceans members with an important opportunity to provide information on progress achieved on the identification of areas of collaboration and synergy. UN-Oceans members discussed how an analysis of the inventory could assist them in identifying synergies and possible areas for collaboration. It was further noted that the inventory could also provide Member States with a unique platform to have a consolidated view of oceans-related activities within the UN system. In this regard, several members of UN-Oceans further noted that they already provided information on inter-agency cooperation to their governing bodies. In particular, IMO indicated that it reported on its collaboration with UN-Oceans and FAO noted similarly that it had included a statement on its work within UN-Oceans in its report to the next meeting of its Committee on Fisheries.

29. The Chair suggested that UN-Oceans members should consider doing the same and include in their reporting to their respective governing bodies, references to collaboration within UN-Oceans and the UN-Oceans inventory.

30. UN-Oceans members agreed not only to proceed with the development and update of inventory, as well as the identification of synergies and areas of collaboration in accordance with the terms of reference of UN-Oceans, but also to further discuss how to increase awareness of areas of collaboration, including through the inventory.

31. Ideas for possibilities of increasing awareness of synergies and areas of collaboration that were put forward included the organization of informational video-conferences and webinars, promotional videos and the organization of events in collaboration with interested States, including small island developing States.

32. Noting that updating of the UN-Oceans events calendar was the shared responsibility of all UN-Oceans members. FAO noted that it could periodically send messages (every two to three months) prompting members to provide or confirm information for posting to the calendar.

33. FAO informed members that the UN Atlas of the Oceans was currently under revision and would be shortly launched. The FAO stated that further discussion was required to determine how to improve collaboration within the Atlas.

Item 7 – Scheduling of next meeting

34. UN-Oceans members agreed to have a face-to-face meeting on 25 August 2016, in New York, before the second session of the Preparatory Committee established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/292: Development of 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.

35. UN-Oceans members also agreed that meetings should be held quarterly in order to address issues in the Work Programme, including administrative matters, in a timely manner. Annual face-to-face meeting should be held to address mostly outstanding substantive issues.

36. DOALOS/OLA recalled that at the meeting in London, United Kingdom, it was agreed that every two years, UN-Oceans face-to-face meeting would be held on a rotating basis, away from New York to encourage ownership by UN-Oceans members. The International Seabed Authority noted that it would explore the possibility of holding the next face-to-face meeting in Kingston, Jamaica

Item 8 – Other matters

37. CBD provided information on the forthcoming meeting of the “Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress Towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets”, which is expected to enable regional marine and fisheries organizations to reinforce cross sectoral collaboration towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and SDG 14. The Meeting will take place from 26 to 29 September 2016, in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

Item 9 – Closing

38. UN-Oceans thanked Ms. Irena Zubcevic for chairing the meeting. The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting.