

# Ocean Decade Progress Report

July 2023 – June 2024

The United Nations  
Decade of Ocean Science  
for Sustainable Development  
**(2021–2030)**



**2021  
2030** United Nations Decade  
of Ocean Science  
for Sustainable Development

# THE OCEAN DECADE

## in July 2024 in a snapshot

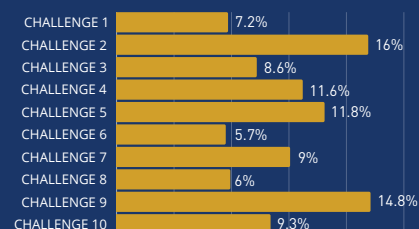
### ENDORSED OCEAN DECADE ACTIONS

 **56** PROGRAMMES  
**446** PROJECTS  
**100** CONTRIBUTIONS  
**802** ACTIVITIES



DECADE ACTIONS LED  
BY PARTNERS FROM  
**70**  
COUNTRIES

#### ENDORSED ACTIONS PER CHALLENGE



### REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COORDINATION

**6**  
REGIONAL  
TASKFORCES  
AND PROGRAMMES

**16**  
DECADE  
IMPLEMENTING  
PARTNERS



**39**  
NATIONAL  
DECADE  
COMMITTEES

**11**  
DECADE  
COLLABORATIVE CENTRES/  
COORDINATION OFFICES

### ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH



**81,800+**  
FOLLOWERS ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA

**11** PATRONS AND  
**19** INSTITUTIONAL  
MEMBERS OF THE  
OCEAN DECADE  
ALLIANCE



**7** INFORMAL  
WORKING GROUPS

OVER **20**  
MEMBERS  
OF THE  
FOUNDATIONS  
DIALOGUE







**8,900**  
MEMBERS  
FROM **173** COUNTRIES  
ON THE OCEAN DECADE  
NETWORK



2021 United Nations Decade  
of Ocean Science  
for Sustainable Development

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# Foreword

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we look back on this year of progress and collaboration, the results of our annual monitoring and evaluation exercise continue to tell a powerful story of growth and impact. Since its launch in 2021, the Ocean Decade has become the largest coordinated global initiative for ocean science and knowledge, bringing together individuals and institutions from across the world. As of 2024, over 23,000 individuals from more than 3,200 partner institutions, including 2,500 Early Career Ocean Professionals, are engaged in Decade Actions. We have seen the launch of more than 29,700 capacity development initiatives, reaching over 260,000 beneficiaries, with 155 newly endorsed Decade Actions, and over 10,000 knowledge products generated across the different Ocean Decade Challenges.

In addition, 39 countries have now established National Decade Committees, whose efforts have reached close to 24,000 people. These numbers are a testament to the collective will and collaboration that underpins the Ocean Decade's success, but they are also a reminder that the journey is far from complete. Challenges remain, and persistent barriers must be overcome to ensure the Decade achieves its full potential – delivering inclusive, co-designed, and co-delivered ocean knowledge that transcends geographical, gender, and generational divides.

A key milestone in 2024 was the Ocean Decade Conference, hosted by the Kingdom of Spain and co-organized with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), which brought together over 2,600 participants from 124 countries. This pivotal event advanced discussions on the Decade's future through the Vision 2030 framework and culminated in the release of The [Barcelona Statement](#), summarizing key priorities and commitments for the future of the Ocean Decade.

Guided by the Vision 2030 process, The Barcelona Statement identifies science and knowledge priorities in areas such as marine pollution, deep-sea ecosystems, sustainable aquatic food production, carbon mitigation, coastal resilience, and the human-ocean connection. Cross-cutting themes emphasized inclusivity, equity, strengthened support for Small

Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), capacity development, and increased investment in ocean science and infrastructure.

This Progress Report serves not only as a reflection of achievements but also as a call to action in the lead-up to the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference and beyond. It invites governments, philanthropists, NGOs, the scientific community, private sector partners and all other ocean actors to engage in the Ocean Decade and provide the support needed to sustain Decade Actions and coordination structures. We hope it inspires new partnerships and deeper engagement in this global initiative. Special emphasis is placed on empowering SIDS and LDCs to leverage the Decade's resources, fostering inclusive frameworks for locally and nationally relevant knowledge. Finally, it calls upon leaders, policymakers, and societal actors worldwide to collaborate with the Decade's portfolio of initiatives, driving science-based decisions for sustainable ocean management and securing the future we envision.

I am immensely proud of all we have accomplished so far, but the second half of the Ocean Decade will commence in 2025 and the journey ahead is just as important. The Ocean Decade is a shared endeavor, and together, we will create the ocean we want by 2030.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to all the institutions, individuals, and organizations that have supported the Decade, and to the Decade Coordination Unit within UNESCO-IOC for its tireless dedication to advancing our shared vision. Together, we are shaping the future of our ocean.

Sincerely,



**Vidar Helgesen**

Executive Secretary

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission  
of UNESCO

# Acknowledgements

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (UNESCO-IOC) extends its deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to the transformative journey of the Ocean Decade since its launch in January 2021. This includes the Decade Actions, Working Groups, and Committees that have shaped its vision, the institutions and individuals who have shared their expertise, time, and dedication, and the partners who have provided financial or in-kind support to its implementation. Crucial support was received from several Member States and organizations, including Belgium, Canada, France, Fugro, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, the Research Council of Norway, Schmidt Ocean Institute, Sweden, and REV-Ocean. UNESCO-IOC is honored to serve as the global coordinator of the Ocean Decade, a role made possible by the generous support of numerous Member States and organizations.

*Note: This report is based on the results of the second iteration of the Ocean Decade Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, which was launched with all Decade Actions in late 2023. It covers activities from July 2023 to June 2024. However, due to relatively low response rates and a bias towards responses from Decade Actions led by institutions in developed countries, the results presented in this report should be interpreted as broad trends in the Ocean Decade. Furthermore, due to changes in the M&E Framework that were introduced in this period compared to the last period, direct comparison of data between this progress report and the previous edition covering 2022 and 2023 should be interpreted with care.*



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# Acronyms

<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>DCC</b>	Decade Collaborative Centre
<b>DCO</b>	Decade Coordination Office
<b>DCU</b>	Decade Coordination Unit
<b>DIP</b>	Decade Implementing Partner
<b>ECOP</b>	Early Career Ocean Professional
<b>GOOS</b>	Global Ocean Observing System
<b>ILK</b>	Indigenous and Local Knowledge
<b>IOC</b>	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
<b>IOCARIBE</b>	IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions
<b>IODE</b>	International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange
<b>LDC</b>	Least Developed Country
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NDC</b>	National Decade Committee
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing State
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNOC</b>	United Nations Ocean Conference
<b>WESTPAC</b>	IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific

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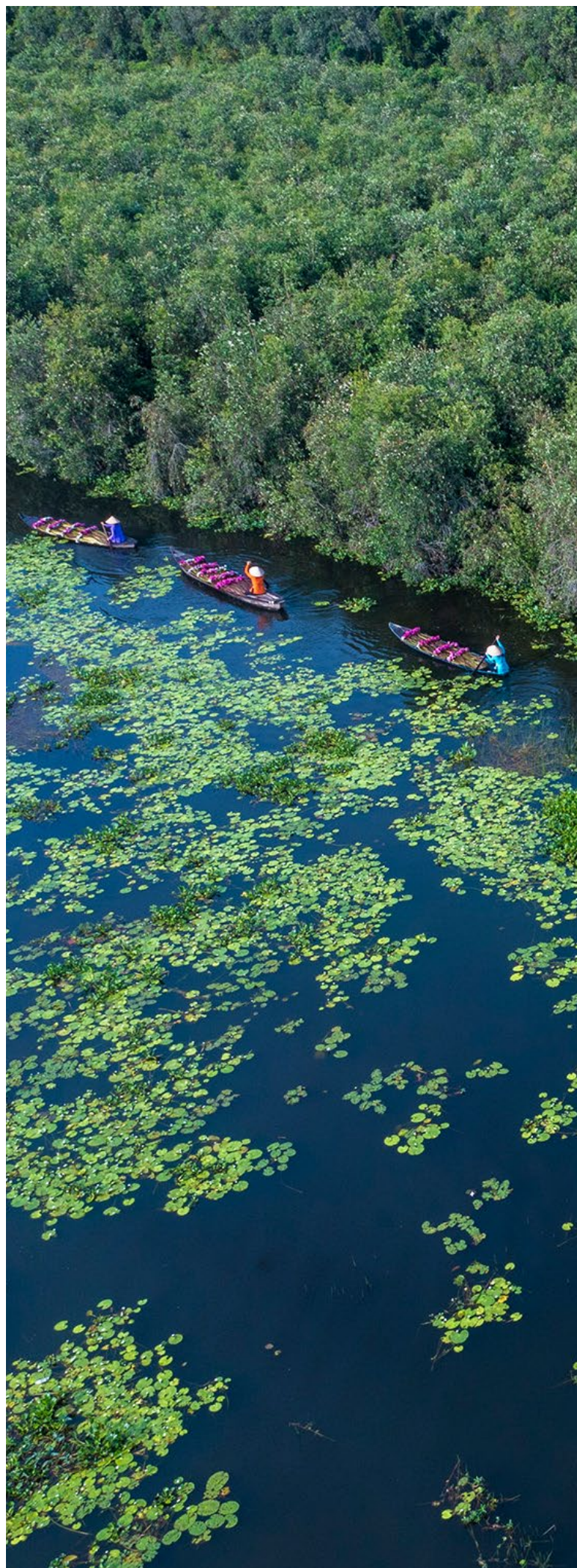
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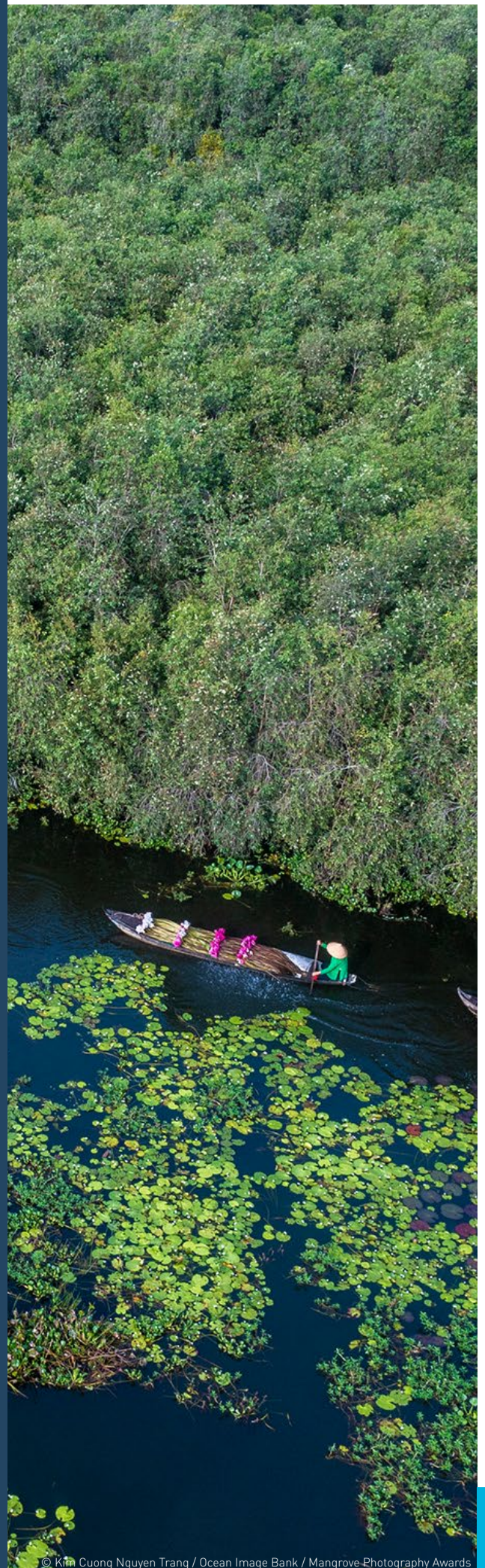
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(IOC/2025/ODS/53)



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# Introduction

Proclaimed by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2017, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), also known as the Ocean Decade, is a framework to identify, generate, and use critical ocean knowledge that is needed to manage the ocean sustainably, and achieve global aspirations for climate, biodiversity, and human well-being. With the vision of 'the science we need for the ocean we want', the Ocean Decade offers an inclusive and global framework for diverse actors to co-create transformative ocean science that addresses [10 Ocean Decade Challenges](#). Its collaborative approach is driving essential insights that shape global, regional, and national policies, aligning with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Led by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and supported by a network of partners across the UN system, governments, industry, civil society, and the scientific community, the Ocean Decade is a collective effort for a better future.

The **2023-2024 Progress Report**, covering the period from July 2023 to June 2024, highlights key outcomes across the four main pillars of activity:

- ▶ Decade Actions
- ▶ Governance and coordination structures
- ▶ Resource mobilization
- ▶ Stakeholder engagement and outreach

It also reflects on the outcomes of the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference and looks ahead to future prospects for the Ocean Decade.



## The 2024 Ocean Decade Conference and Vision 2030 Process

The [2024 Ocean Decade Conference](#), hosted by the Kingdom of Spain and co-organized with UNESCO-IOC, brought together over 2,600 participants from 124 countries, making it a pivotal moment for discussing the future of the Ocean Decade via the framework of the Vision 2030 process. [The Barcelona Statement](#) documents the key recommendations of the Conference and synthesizes a series of announcements and commitments made by UNESCO-IOC and partners.

The priorities that emerged from the Conference were identified based on the year-long [Vision 2030](#) process during which expert working groups developed a strategic ambition for each of the 10 Ocean Decade Challenges, documented in a series of White Papers. These [White Papers](#) were discussed throughout the Conference and led to the identification of a series of science and knowledge priorities related to marine pollution, deep-sea ecosystems, sustainable aquatic food production, ocean solutions for carbon mitigation, coastal resilience, and a greater understanding of the human-ocean connection, including the links between ocean and human health. A series of cross-cutting priorities were also identified, including the need for strengthened role of policy/user needs as drivers of Decade Actions, approaches to increase engagement of and support for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the Ocean Decade, and reinforced national level action. The importance of capacity development was highlighted, along with recommendations to increase investment in strategic communication of science and adoption of a broad approach to ocean literacy that works across all parts of society. Increased inclusivity, equity, and diversity in the Ocean Decade was outlined, including tools and resources to embrace alternative knowledge systems. Finally, the recommendations had a strong focus on the need for sustained and sustainable investment by diverse partners in ocean science initiatives and infrastructure.

Among the announcements and commitments that were made were the launch of new programmes on sustainable ocean planning as well as management in Africa, a proposal for a Decade Collaborative Centre focusing on the Sustainable Blue Economy in Barcelona, and an international coastal cities congress set to be hosted by Qingdao Municipality, China, in early 2025, alongside announcements of new funding streams for Africa and SIDS.

# Achieving the Decade Challenges through Decade Actions



# Decade Programmes, Projects and Contributions

Over the past year, the Ocean Decade has made significant strides in global engagement through an expanding and increasingly diverse portfolio of endorsed Decade Actions. The Call for Decade Actions No. 06/2023, launched in October 2023, focused on partners in Africa and Caribbean SIDS, and received over 50 submissions. In April 2024,

Call for Decade Actions No. 07/2024 aimed to gather resources to bolster existing Decade Actions and launch new ones. This Call also sought fresh initiatives to enhance the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility, creating opportunities for new Projects to join endorsed Decade Programmes. By June 2024, the Calls for Decade Actions had already made a significant impact, with a total of 56 global Programmes, 446 regional and national Projects, and 100 Contributions officially endorsed.

## Box 1: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 1: MARINE POLLUTION

### National Seabed Enhancement Programme

Since 2022, Senegal's Directorate of Management and Exploitation of the Seabed has spearheaded a national seabed clean-up programme to address lost, discarded, or abandoned fishing gear. This initiative involves regular diving operations by professional divers to remove marine debris.

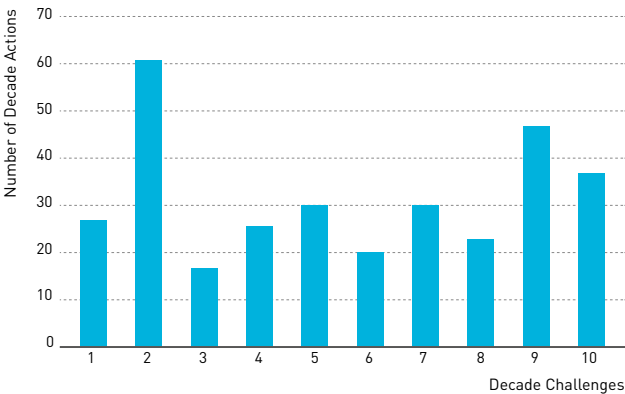
The programme has had a notable impact on both local and international fronts. Locally, it has heightened awareness about fishing gear's negative effects, leading to stricter regulations. Internationally, it has fostered collaborations and knowledge sharing with global organizations, enhancing local marine resource management capabilities.

Results include significant reductions in marine pollution, improvements in biodiversity in cleaned areas, and strengthened marine litter management policies. The success of this programme has demonstrated its effectiveness in improving marine ecosystem health and policy development, and it serves as a model for sustainable seabed management.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/national-seabed-enhancement-programme/>

Decade Actions cover every ocean basin and tackle all 10 Ocean Decade Challenges, with Challenge 2 (Ecosystem Management and Restoration) and Challenge 10 (Behavior Change) the most common Challenges to which Decade Actions are contributing. The portfolio of Decade Actions reflects the collective work of thousands of individuals and institutions worldwide, and it is clear that interest in the Ocean Decade is not only strong but growing, as people around the globe unite under this shared mission.

Figure 1: Challenge distribution for endorsed Decade Actions.

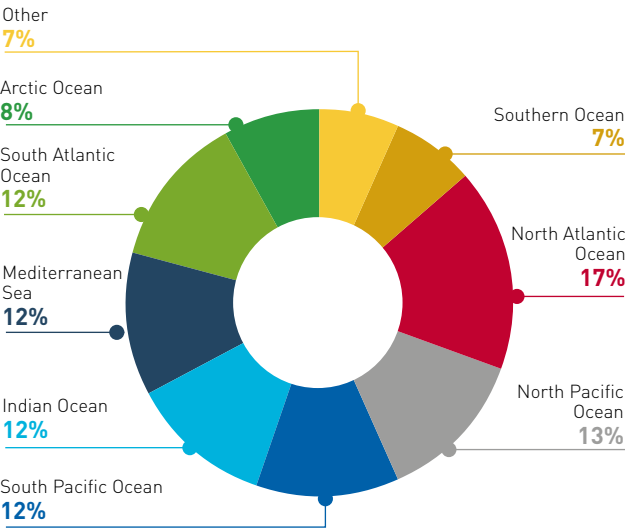


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When it comes to the geographical implementation of the Decade, developed countries are the most prominent. Over the past year, lead institutions in the

United States, France, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Spain have reported the highest number of Decade Actions implemented. The implementation gap between ocean basins is narrowing, with growth in Decade Actions working in the South Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Mediterranean Sea.

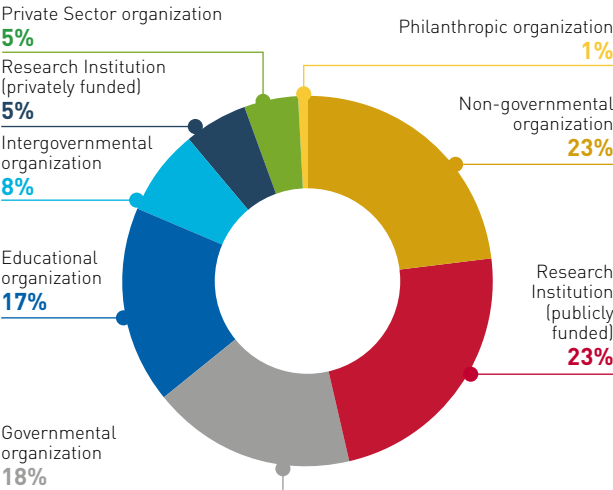
Figure 2: Geographical coverage of endorsed Decade Actions by ocean basin.



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While 15 to 20% of Decade Actions are being implemented in Africa and SIDS, leadership from these regions remains low, with only 6% and 2.3% of Actions led by local institutions, respectively. Similar trends are projected for the next 24 months, highlighting the need to further elevate voices and leadership from these crucial regions. In terms of institutional leadership, Decade Actions are predominantly led by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes.

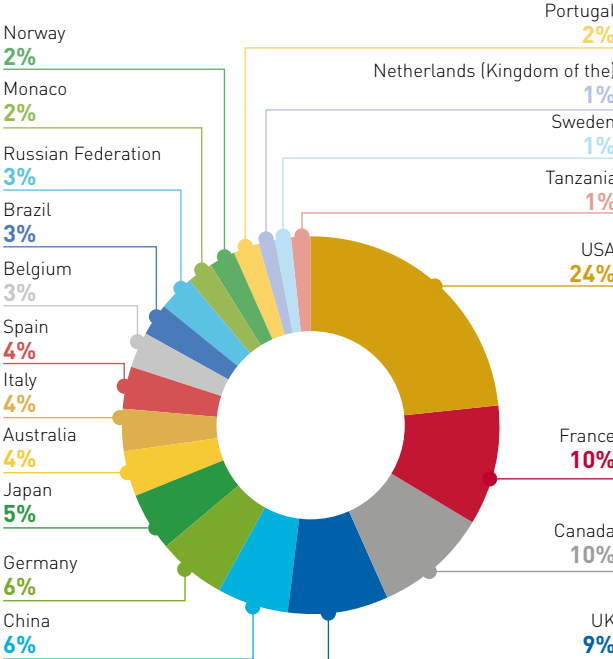
**Figure 3.a:** Top 10 types of lead institutions.



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Among the 23,100 individuals involved in Decade Actions over the reporting period, most were from the United States, China, Australia, Canada, and France. Within this group, 42.5% were women and 48.6% were men, which could represent a downwards trend in gender equity in Decade Actions. 32% of individuals involved in Decade Actions identify as Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs), underscoring a strong commitment to nurturing the next generation of ocean leaders.

**Figure 3.b:** Top 10 countries of endorsed Decade Actions' lead institutions.

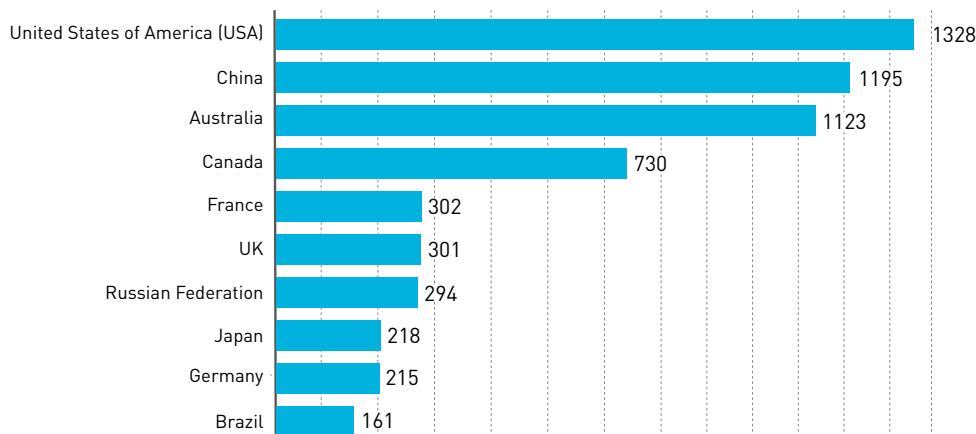


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**Figure 4:** Top 10 countries of individuals involved in the Decade Actions.



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## Box 2: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 2: PROTECT AND RESTORE ECOSYSTEMS

### Save the Waves mobile app

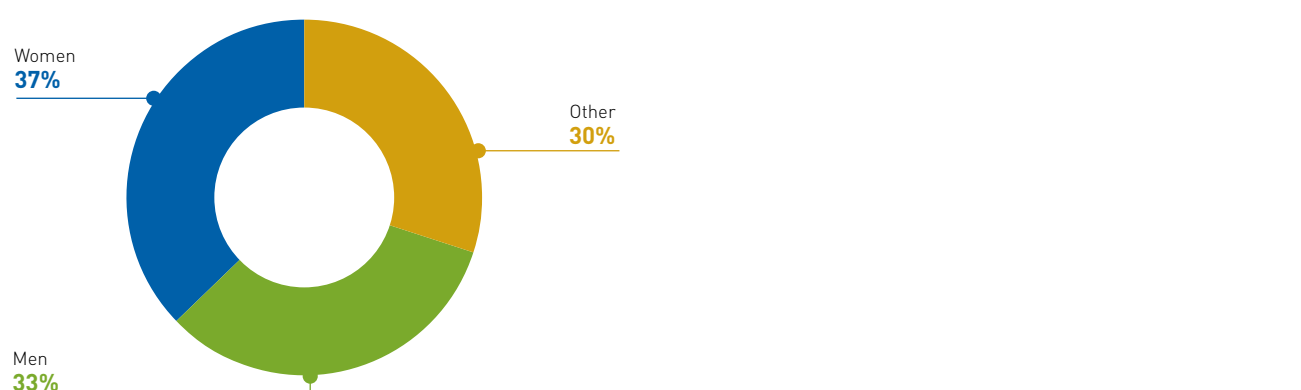
The Save the Waves App empowers citizens to report environmental threats to coastal zones, connecting local concerns to action. Last year, in collaboration with Dawn Patrol, the app saw global participation, with a standout report from Gold Coast, Australia, highlighting ongoing sewage issues. This report, submitted by a giveaway winner, sparked direct engagement with the city of Gold Coast through the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve.

As a result, local authorities are now actively addressing the sewage problem by convening stakeholders and exploring infrastructure improvements. This case study exemplifies the app's mission: fostering connections between citizens and local governments to drive tangible environmental change in communities worldwide.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/save-the-waves-mobile-app/>

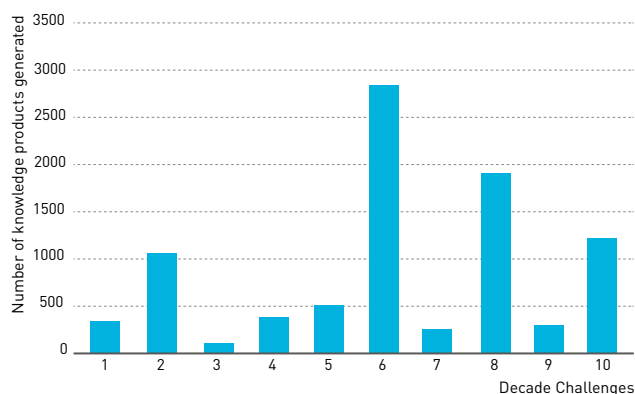
Over the last year, capacity development has been a major focus of the work of Decade Actions, with initiatives benefiting over 268,300 individuals, particularly ECOPs. However, there is a clear geographical skew, with most beneficiaries from Europe, and North America. In response to this imbalance, targeted efforts are underway to boost capacity development initiatives to benefit SIDS and Africa primarily through the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility, which was launched in December 2023 and aims to address the capacity development needs of partners in SIDS, LDCs, and ECOPs.

**Figure 5:** Number of capacity development beneficiaries disaggregated by gender and career stage.



Decade Actions generated approximately 10,000 knowledge products, including media articles and peer reviewed publications, with the highest outputs related to themes of coastal resilience, ocean data, and behavior change. 142 knowledge products were developed based on Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK). 9,800 examples of uptake of knowledge products were noted — for example through citations in peer reviewed literature, educational tools, or policy documents. Over 154,000 new datasets were created and stored in recognized data repositories.

**Figure 6:** Generation of knowledge products by Decade Challenge.

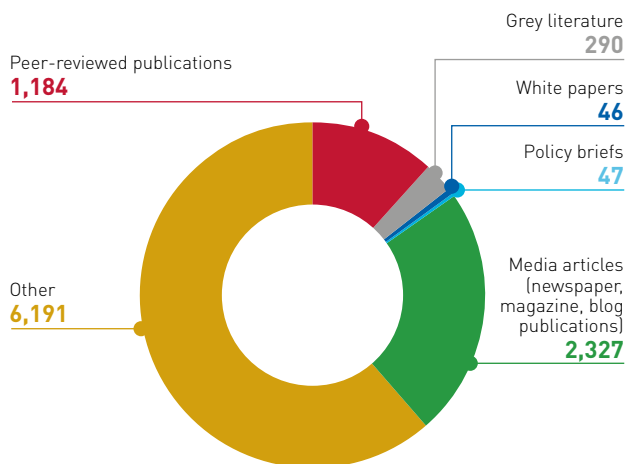


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## Decade Activities

In addition to Decade Programmes and Projects, over the past year, 181 Decade Activities were endorsed, with the majority occurring in Europe and North

**Figure 7:** Most common knowledge product types.



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America. An important number also took place in Brazil and India. The most common types of Decade Activities include conferences and symposia, followed by training sessions, workshops, publications, and exhibitions. Nearly half of these Activities were led by NGOs, followed by research institutes.

### Box 3: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 3: SUSTAINABLE BLUE FOOD

#### Advancing the European Seas' Marine Research and Innovation to support their biodiversity and resilience under multistressors: ReSealience

The "ReSealience" project, which aims to enhance marine research and innovation to support biodiversity and resilience in European seas under multiple stressors, showcases a successful collaboration through its link with the H2020-funded "BRIDGE-BS" project. Focused on the Black Sea, BRIDGE-BS serves as a key implementing initiative for ReSealience, advancing marine research to co-develop sustainable blue economy pathways.

BRIDGE-BS has created a safe operating space by defining marine planetary boundaries and ensuring policy uptake through contributions to Digital Twin initiatives. It utilizes a smart observation system, AI-based decision support tools, adaptive management strategies, and an ensemble model approach. Operating across six pilot sites, BRIDGE-BS contributes to the Black Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) by fostering ecosystem-based management and citizen engagement. The project supports the Ocean Decade objectives and exemplifies effective science-policy collaboration, as demonstrated by its action plan for the Sea of Marmara following the 2021 mucilage crisis.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/advancing-the-european-seas-marine-research-and-innovation-to-support-their-biodiversity-and-resilience-under-multi-stressors-resealience/>



# Governance and Coordination of the Ocean Decade

The Ocean Decade is composed of several interconnected components. At its core is the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU), located within the UNESCO-IOC Secretariat, which oversees global coordination of the Ocean Decade. The DCU also facilitates collaboration with the decentralized coordination structures, partners, and groups that play a vital role in driving the success of the Ocean Decade.

## Decade Advisory Board

The Decade Advisory Board continued its vital role in providing strategic guidance to the Ocean Decade throughout this period. As 2023 concluded, the first group of expert Board members completed their term, leading to the nomination of a new Board comprising

[15 expert members](#) and 5 UN agencies in January 2024. Throughout this period, the Decade Advisory Board met four times, including an in-person meeting in May 2024. The Board's discussions covered a broad spectrum of issues, from recommendations on endorsing new Decade Programmes to ensuring these initiatives align with the Decade's priorities and address key Ocean Decade Challenges. The Board also focused on enhancing progress evaluation, boosting resource mobilization, and better integration of ILK into the Decade. Additionally, they explored strategies to increase the involvement of SIDS and LDCs, amplifying the voices of these critical regions, and operationalizing the recommendations of the Vision 2030 process.

### Box 4: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 4: SUSTAINABLE OCEAN ECONOMY

#### The Royal Society

The Royal Society hosted a one-day workshop in September 2023 on 'Legacy plastics in the marine environment', in partnership with the British Government's Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The workshop brought together over 40 scientists including experts and early-career researchers.

The workshop generated valuable insights on topics such as environmentally-sound recovery and waste management after recovery. These outputs have been used by Defra to inform their position in the global plastics treaty negotiations, as well as in regard to discarded fishing gear in collaboration with the UN Sustainable Fisheries Resolution. This workshop exemplifies how targeted scientific dialogue can directly contribute to international policy development and environmental governance.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/royal-society-ocean-science-policy-programme/>

## Decentralized Coordination Structures

Decentralized coordination is a cornerstone of the Ocean Decade. Decade Coordination Offices (DCOs) and Decade Collaborative Centres (DCCs) are vital in assisting the DCU with managing Decade Actions, sparking new initiatives, fostering stakeholder engagement, mobilizing resources, and promoting the objectives of the Decade. DCOs and DCCs are set up by UN or non-UN partners and designed to focus on either specific geographic regions or thematic areas.

On the ground, the impact of the Decade is expanding through 11 DCCs and DCOs, along with 16 Decade Implementing Partners (DIPs). Six DCOs are hosted by UNESCO-IOC, covering regions from the Western Pacific to Africa. However, there is a need for additional resources to fully operationalize DCOs in key areas like Africa and the Caribbean. In total, these centers and partners have rolled out over 1,379 capacity development initiatives in the last reporting period, benefiting more than 29,000 people, among which nearly half are women and 63% are ECOPs.

<b>Decade Collaborative Centre or Decade Coordination Office</b>	<b>Host Institution</b>
Decade Coordination Office for the Western Pacific (DCO-WESTPAC)	IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC)
Decade Coordination Office for Ocean Data Sharing (DCO-ODS)	IOC International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) Programme
Decade Coordination Office for Ocean Observing (DCO-OO)	IOC Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS)
Decade Coordination Office for Connecting People and Ocean	UNESCO Venice (Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe)
Ocean Visions – UN Decade Collaborative Centre for Ocean-Climate Solutions (OV-UN DCC)	Ocean Visions
Decade Collaborative Centre for Ocean Prediction (DCC-OP)	Mercator Ocean International
Decade Collaborative Centre for Ocean-Climate Nexus and Coordination amongst Decade Implementing Partners in P.R. China (DCC-OCC)	First Institute of Oceanography, China
Decade Collaborative Centre for Coastal Resilience (DCC-CR)	University of Bologna, Italy
Decade Collaborative Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (DCC-IOR)	Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
Decade Collaborative Centre for the Southern Ocean Region (DCC-SOR)	Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)
Decade Collaborative Centre for the Pacific Islands Region of the Pacific Ocean (DCC-PIR-PO)	The Pacific Community (SPC)

Decade Implementing Partner	Country
European Marine Board	Belgium
Joint Programming Initiative Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans (JPI Oceans)	Belgium
Heirs to Our Ocean	United States of America
EurOcean	Portugal
National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (NIOF)	Egypt
Peking University	China
The Administrative Centre for China's Agenda 21 (ACCA) / Ministry of Science and Technology	China
Royal College of Art	United Kingdom
Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO)	United Kingdom
European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet)	Belgium
Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ)	Belgium
National Marine Data and Information Service (NMDIS)	China
One Ocean Hub	United Kingdom
National Research Council, Canada	Canada
European Global Ocean Observing System (EuroGOOS)	Belgium
Southern University of Science and Technology and the Preparing Shenzhen Ocean University (SUSTech and SOU)	China

## Regional Taskforces

The Africa Regional Taskforce is in its second year of operation and met for its annual in-person meeting in Casablanca, Morocco, in February 2024. During this meeting, the Taskforce advanced on the development of the Africa-wide Decade Programme 'SEAWARD' and finalized plans for its engagement at the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference. The [SEAWARD Programme](#), which provides the operational framework for the implementation of the [Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap](#), was subsequently officially launched at the Conference.

The Tropical Americas and Caribbean Taskforce met for its first in-person gathering in San José, Costa Rica, in June 2024. This meeting focused on the development of an [Ocean Decade roadmap for the region](#) which was launched in late 2024.

## Box 5: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 5: OCEAN-CLIMATE NEXUS

### **Migravías: Connecting marine protected areas (MPAs) with ocean swimways to protect migratory routes of endangered species between critical habitats**

MigraMar, a network of scientists working across the Eastern Pacific, has advanced marine conservation through several impactful initiatives, each supporting the protection of migratory swimways between critical marine habitats. Their efforts have demonstrated the importance of marine corridors and led to groundbreaking policies that enhance the safety and preservation of endangered marine species.

#### ***Reducing ship-whale collisions in the Gulf of Panama***

Ship traffic poses a severe risk to endangered whale populations. MigraMar's team analyzed data from whales and vessels to develop a routing system that could decrease whale-ship collisions by up to 93%. This research led to the International Maritime Organization's adoption of a Traffic Separation Scheme spanning 65 nautical miles, including a vessel speed limit of 10 knots during humpback whale migration. Enacted in 2014, this scheme has significantly reduced the risk of collisions in this crucial habitat.

#### ***Establishing the Hermandad Marine Reserve***

In January 2022, Ecuador's President inaugurated the 60,000 km<sup>2</sup> Hermandad Marine Reserve to safeguard migratory routes of leatherback turtles and hammerhead sharks. The reserve, based on MigraMar's two-year study, connects the Galapagos Marine Reserve with Costa Rica's Cocos Island, and includes 50% no-take and 50% no-longline zones, addressing critical conservation and fisheries management needs.

#### ***Expanding Malpelo's Protected Area***

In 2017, MigraMar's research supported the expansion of Colombia's Malpelo MPA, recognizing the biodiversity in the Malpelo Ridge. Following expeditions revealing rich ecosystems comparable to Galapagos and Cocos, the protected area was further expanded in 2021 to cover all seamounts of the Malpelo Ridge, now spanning over 4.8 million hectares.

#### ***Colombia's ban on shark trade***

In response to significant declines in hammerhead shark populations, Colombia passed Decree 281 in 2021, banning the commercial trade of sharks. MigraMar's studies documenting a 70% decline in regional shark populations informed this pioneering measure, setting a conservation standard for the region.

These success stories highlight MigraMar's role in implementing research-based conservation measures to protect endangered species along essential migratory routes in the Eastern Pacific.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/migravias-connecting-marine-protected-areas-mpas-through-ocean-swimways-to-protect-migratory-routes-and-critical-habitats-of-endangered-species/>

## National Decade Committees

At the national level, 39 National Decade Committees (NDCs) are pushing the Decade's agenda forward, although there is a gap in coverage, especially in SIDS and LDCs. These Committees, averaging 37 members mostly from government or research

institutions, have spearheaded over 250 activities focused on ocean science, ocean literacy, capacity development, and workshops. The most common types of activities carried out by NDCs include podcasts, exhibitions, capacity development initiatives, followed by conferences and training sessions. This year, nearly 24,000 people benefited from NDC activities.

**Figure 8:** Established National Decade Committees.



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## Informal Working Groups

Established in December 2021, the Data Coordination Group published the Data and Information Strategy in June 2023. In the period since then, a more technical working group of data experts was convened in July 2023 – the Data Strategy Implementation Group – to develop an Implementation Plan for the Data Strategy that will be published in late 2024.

The Corporate Data Group, established in February 2023, developed data sharing use cases for three types

of data: bathymetry, biodiversity data (specifically, marine mammal observations) and metocean data. The goal is to establish guidelines for sharing these types of data that can then be used to foster broader industry engagement in data sharing.

A renewed Strategic Communications Group of 33 experts is advising on effective communication strategies. Additionally, the Ocean Decade Expert Roster, now boasting over 250 members, provides crucial support in setting strategic targets and reviewing Programme submissions.

### Box 6: SUCCESS STORIES ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 6: COASTAL RESILIENCE

#### Strengthening the resilience of coastal communities in the Northeast Atlantic, Mediterranean Region to the impact of tsunamis and other sea level-related coastal hazards

The “Coastal Horizons: Pathways and actions to strengthen resilience to coastal hazards” side event, held at the 57th session of the IOC Executive Council in June 2024, brought together key Ocean Decade Actions under Challenge 6, showcasing impactful developments in preparedness for coastal hazards. New scientific tools were highlighted, including inundation zone and evacuation maps, which enhance communities’ ability to respond to ocean hazards.

The project led to the establishment of coordination structures in various countries and reinforced institutional frameworks, such as integrating Standard Operating Procedures into emergency response plans. With UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready communities as a model, the initiative engaged stakeholders at multiple levels, contributing to regional resilience across the North-East Atlantic and Mediterranean. These outcomes provide essential support for communities and decision-makers navigating ocean-based threats.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/strengthening-resilience-coastal-communities-ne-atlantic-mediterranean-tsunamis-other-sea-level-related-coastal-hazards/>

### Popular observatory of the sea – Amazon coast

The project harnesses citizen science to involve coastal communities in monitoring sea level rise impacts along the Amazon coast. By engaging local populations in data collection, the project aims to bridge knowledge gaps and prepare communities for challenges like erosion, flooding, and saline intrusion, which threaten both biodiversity and livelihoods. Utilizing voluntary geographic information, it validates remote sensing data with hands-on measurements from nine trained coastal communities using low-cost equipment.

The project has successfully integrated sea level rise discussions into community meetings and school activities, raising awareness about climate change's effects on coastal environments. It has shifted the focus from inland forests to the critical role of the ocean, demonstrating its significant impact on the daily lives of coastal residents and enhancing their understanding of climate change.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/popular-observatory-of-the-sea-amazon-coast/>

# Mobilizing resources for the Ocean Decade



Mobilizing in-kind and financial resources remains a significant challenge for the successful implementation of the Decade. Over the last year, the Ocean Decade received crucial support from several Member States and organizations, including Belgium, Canada, France, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Sweden, as well as Fugro, Research Council of Norway, Schmidt Ocean Institute, and REV-Ocean.

The [Ocean Decade Alliance](#) grew during this period to 11 Patrons and 19 institutional members. These members were active in high-level events, helping to raise the Ocean Decade's profile and collaborating on funding initiatives. Notably, co-branded Calls for Decade Actions were completed with the Belmont Forum and the European Commission-led Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership.

### Box 7: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 7: OCEAN OBSERVATIONS

#### Sistema de información oceanográfica CHONOS

The CHONOS oceanographic web platform has significantly contributed to understanding and managing the complex environment of Chilean Patagonia. By developing and validating a hydrodynamic model to describe water circulation patterns in southern Chile, CHONOS has supported the Chilean Undersecretariat of Fisheries and Aquaculture in establishing “Macrozones”. These large marine territories, designed based on oceanographic data, help contain disease outbreaks by ensuring sanitary isolation between aquaculture clusters. Additionally, CHONOS developed the Aquaculture Environmental Data Centre, which aids national authorities in selecting monitoring sites within salmonid aquaculture concessions. The platform ensures compliance with Chilean regulations by validating and storing oceanographic data collected by monitoring buoys, enabling real-time environmental monitoring.

Through these efforts, CHONOS has effectively linked science, policy, and society, providing critical tools for sustainable aquaculture management and ocean governance in Chilean Patagonia.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/sistema-de-informacion-oceanografica-chonos/>

Efforts to engage [philanthropic foundations](#) also ramped up, with a key meeting held in June 2023 in Monaco, hosted by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. The [2023 Monaco Statement](#) outlines four priority action areas to bolster philanthropic engagement in, and support of, the Ocean Decade.

Additionally, funding is urgently needed to support current and future Decade Actions. To date, about USD 36 million has been secured by Decade Actions for the next 12 months of their implementation, but an additional USD 43 million is still needed for effective implementation over the next 12 months, leaving a funding gap of 54%.

**Tables 1 and 2:** Available resources and funding needs for implementation of Decade Actions.

Available resources for implementation of Decade Actions		
	Available financial resources	Available in-kind resources
	USD 23.3 million	USD 13.4 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>USD 36.7 million</b>	

Funding needs for implementation of Decade Actions		
	Needs in financial resources	Needs in in-kind resources
	USD 36.3 million	USD 6.6 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>USD 42.9 million</b>	

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**Unpath'd Waters**

The “Unpath'd Waters” initiative has successfully enhanced connectivity between marine heritage data across the United Kingdom’s devolved administrations – England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland – while respecting their individual needs and interests. Maritime heritage, including assets like shipwrecks that span multiple jurisdictions, presents unique challenges for research, public engagement, and marine management. Unpath'd Waters addresses these by providing an innovative system that allows transnational queries across political and maritime boundaries, preserving national records’ independence.

This approach has already proven effective, with the Isle of Man adopting the same method to record its maritime heritage. By enabling coordinated management of shared heritage across sea areas, Unpath'd Waters offers a transformative solution that fosters an accessible and engaging ocean. Its success demonstrates the potential for wider application globally, ensuring that maritime heritage is preserved and managed sustainably across borders.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/unpathd-waters/>

# Stakeholder engagement and outreach



During this period, there was a surge in stakeholder engagement and outreach efforts, with significant events held at key gatherings such as the SDG Summit in New York, USA (September 2023), COP28 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (December 2023), the 4th UN International SIDS Conference in Antigua and Barbuda (May 2024), and the Immersed in Change Conference in Costa Rica (June 2024). The 2024 Ocean Decade Conference stood out as the highlight of stakeholder engagement efforts.

From 2023 to 2024, the Ocean Decade online presence saw an impressive growth. The annual website audience reached over 6 million people, attracted

217,00 users, and generated 670,600 page views. Notably, 60% of our users were female and 40% male, with most under the age of 34. The website also links to the Ocean Decade Network, an online community platform with over 8,800 registered users serving as a digital hub for Decade-related groups.

Social media presence also considerably increased. Overall, the combined social media reach of Decade Actions, DCCs, DCOs, DIPs, and NDCs is nearing 3 million followers. As the spotlight on outputs and knowledge from Decade Actions continues to intensify, strategic communications will continue to evolve to support and amplify the impact of these vital initiatives.

## Box 9: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 9: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

### Maré de Ciência

Maré de Ciência coordinates key ocean literacy initiatives in Brazil, including the Blue School Brazil programme (over 300 Blue Schools in all regions), the Brazilian Ocean Olympics (over 45,000 participants in the 2023 edition), and the Brazilian Oceanic Literacy Alliance, in partnership with the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation and UNESCO Field Office in Brasília, with the support of the Boticário Group Foundation. These efforts have led to the adoption of ocean literacy laws in 20 municipalities and three states. Additionally, the project used strategic communications to disseminate scientific knowledge and mobilize public opposition to legislation harmful to coastal and marine sustainability and traditional communities. A concrete example is the proposed amendment to the Constitution related to the extinction of marine marginal land increments, which was blocked from being voted during its hearing because of popular mobilization against its progress. Similarly, through the PactoMar project – supported by the Belmont Forum and São Paulo State Research Foundation (FAPESP) – Maré de Ciência addressed a conflict around restrictive fishing legislation that disrupted traditional practices in São Paulo's coastal territory. By analyzing the conflict's history, its developments following the publication of the legislation, and providing analytical support to the legal discussions, Maré de Ciência contributed to the temporary suspension of the legislation. The project continues to act so that the suspension becomes permanent and traditional fishing is allowed.

These combined efforts showcase the project's impact on fostering ocean literacy and advocating for sustainable, inclusive policies that protect both marine environments and traditional communities.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/mare-de-ciencia-tide-of-science/>

# Perspectives for the year ahead



Looking ahead, the major focus of the Ocean Decade will be on bringing the recommendations from [The Barcelona Statement](#) to life and making them a core part of the work of the Decade Coordination Unit and all Decade partners. The insights from this Statement and the Vision 2030 Outcomes Report will steer efforts in shaping future Calls for Decade Actions to tackle key priority areas for each Challenge. New processes and structures will be established to tackle cross-cutting recommendations, and targeted discussions with resource providers will help align funding with the Decade's most urgent needs. The [Ambition, Action, Impact – Ocean Decade Pathway to 2030](#) report synthesizes the priority actions to implement the recommendations of the Vision 2030 process and The Barcelona Statement.

International events, such as COP16 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia (October 2024), and UNFCCC COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan (November 2024), provide key opportunities to discuss these recommendations and build new partnerships. Close collaboration with France and Costa Rica, the co-hosts of the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference

(UNOC) in Nice, France, will ensure that the outcomes of the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference effectively shape discussions and partnerships in 2025. This includes preparation for the One Ocean Science Congress, a special event leading up to the Conference that will focus on the role of ocean science and knowledge to meet the targets of SDG 14 – Life Below Water.

As the Ocean Decade reaches its halfway point in 2025, a mid-term evaluation will assess progress and identify areas for improvement. This evaluation will focus on the delivery mechanisms of the Decade including governance, resource mobilization, science and policy impact, and outreach, with results to be presented at the 33rd session of the IOC Assembly in June 2025.

Looking even further ahead, preparations are underway for the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference with the host country expected to be announced at the IOC Assembly in June 2025.

## Box 10: SUCCESS STORY ON OCEAN DECADE CHALLENGE 10: BEHAVIOR CHANGE

### Ocean Voices

Launched in 2022 at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, Ocean Voices is an international research network fostering inclusive participation in ocean governance. By partnering with ocean thought leaders, Ocean Voices amplifies perspectives from underrepresented groups, including traditional knowledge holders, early-career researchers from the Global South, and representatives from SIDS. Current efforts focus on research supporting the implementation of the Agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), particularly in capacity building and transfer of marine technology.

Ocean Voices creates platforms for dialogue, ensuring diverse voices are heard, and facilitates the meaningful participation of fellows from underrepresented communities, enhancing inclusivity in international ocean governance discussions. The initiative has successfully contributed research papers and policy briefs that informed the BBNJ Agreement and facilitated the creation of the SIDS Ocean Science-Policy Network, empowering SIDS to lead in ocean science and policy.

**More about this Decade Action:** <https://oceandecade.org/actions/ocean-voices/>

# Annex: Newly endorsed Decade Actions over the reporting period

## Endorsed Programmes

Reference number	Name of Decade Action
6.5	Nutrient Pollution – Global Action Network
9.5	World Harbour Seascape Restoration Programme
14.5	The Nippon Foundation-Nekton Ocean Census
21.5	Antarctica Sci&Infra for Synchronous Observation (Antarctica InSync)
1.6	The Future of Fisheries & Marine Ecosystems
2.6	Western Indian Ocean Marine Conservation Program

## Endorsed Projects

Reference number	Name of Decade Action
2.5	The Ocean Cleanup Science & Technology Programme
4.4	Red de Tecnologías para el Océano
5.6	Caspian Sea Carbon Dioxide Removal Project
6.6	Engineering Resilient Caribbean Coastlines
7.6	Sustainable Mariculture Network
2.6	Western Indian Ocean Marine Conservation Program
8.4	Blue carbon for sustainable development
8.5	Health of Ocean under Multiple Ecosystem Stressors
9.4	Climate Data for Community Action
10.4	Global Real-time Early Alarm for Tsunami (GREAT)
11.5	Preventive Management of Industrial-Port zones
13.6	A federated Open Research Ecosystem for the oceans
18.4	The Observatory of Mangrove and its Marenities
20.6	Colombia Ocean-Climate Innovation Hub
21.6	SeaKeepers' Seabed 2030 Project
25.4	Tsunami & Climatic RR at Protected Areas in CR

30.6	Hinemoana Halo Ocean Initiative
31.3	West Coast Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network
31.6	Klimaatlas (The Danish National Climate Atlas)
33.4	Vulnerability of the deep-sea facing exploitation
33.6	Building capacity to protect marine biodiversity
35.6	Typhoon forecast and response in Northwest Pacific
36.4	Conservation of the deep-sea in light of mining
38.6	Ufukwe Marine Center- Ocean Climate Innovation Hub
41.6	3D Purpose Built Reefs for Marine Restoration
42.3	Monitorament o Mirim Costeiro
42.4	Numerical seabed using hydroacoustic digital twins
42.6	INCT Biodiversity of the Blue Amazon
44.4	Sea Level Station Monitoring Facility
44.6	ATLASea: Atlas of marine genomes
45.6	Solent Seascape Project
48.6	Ghana Ocean Climate Innovations Hub
51.4	Global Library of Underwater Biological Sounds
51.6	Building ADAPtive rESilience of Spanish fisheries
55.4	Pilot Digital Twins for Water Pollution in Africa
55.6	Marine Chemical Speciation
57.6	High-resolution sea ice forecast in ARCTic routes
58.6	Sistema de Información Oceanográfica CHONOS
60.6	Textile X Ocean Connector Project
63.6	CIIMAR na Escola / CIIMAR at School
64.4	Coastal Pollution Toolbox
65.6	IOI Ocean Academy - Ocean Knowledge for All
66.6	Marine Research Cruises in Remote Areas
69.4	Mediterranean Sea Ship-based Hydrography
71.6	Developing best handling practices with fishers
73.6	Plankton and planktivory in a changing climate
74.5	Recovering and reusing ghost nets
74.6	Ocean observations of surface waters in Galicia
82.6	Working Group to implement Ocean Literacy in Chile
83.4	Contamination in Mangroves of Northeast Brazil
87.6	Long term observation program in the Baltic Sea
88.6	Forecasting Ocean to Coasts, Connecting Users
91.4	3D sensors for contaminants and marine toxins

101.4	Observatory of Marine Anthropogenic Litter
102.4	Reef-shaped coastlines: Effects of climate change
126.2	Integrated coastal ocean observing and predicting
146.2	World Ocean Database Cloud
10.5	Reefs of Hope: Coral-focused climate adaptation
100.4	Assessing Multiple Stressors in Coastal Ecosystems
12.5	Rewilding the Oceans with Giant Kelp
2.4	Automated Debris Imaging System of ocean plastic
20.5	Nazaré Artificial Reefs Seaweed Planting Pilot
23.5	National Seabed Enhancement Programme
24.5	Patagonia Ocean-Climate Innovation Hub
26.5	Blue Economy Coalition for Ocean Climate Solutions
28.5	Surfside Science
29.5	Picture Perfect: Rapid classification of plankton
3.5	Comparable microplastics monitoring of oceans
31.5	The Mantaverse
32.4	Hybrid governance to protect and manage high seas
32.5	Sustainable Total Value Chain of Cockle Industry
33.5	Northeast Pacific Deep-sea Exploration Project
34.4	Sustainable sea caring and protection technologies
34.5	Marine Biodiversity Library & MPA eDNA monitoring
35.4	Guidance on Optimal Timing for eDNA
35.5	Sea the Value
36.5	SanctuaryReef Food Basket: Empowering Aquafarmers
38.5	New Copernicus capability for ocean food networks
39.4	Ocean Decade Expeditions
39.5	Marine research program Northern Australia
40.5	Baltic Sea Oxygenation and Super-Green H2
42.5	Global Coastal Ocean Restoration and Resilience
43.5	Women from the Sea
44.5	The Grass Underwater Project
45.5	Vaka Oceanstory Lab
46.5	Fishing Vessel Ocean Observing Network
47.5	Quantitative Tools for Responsible Marine Energy
48.5	International Blue Carbon Institute
49.5	10CEAN
5.5	Tanzania Ocean Climate Innovation Hub

51.5	A probabilistic model for plastic clean-up techs
52.5	Intelligent Coastal-Urban-Bay CO2 Emission Studies
53.5	Making environmental DNA FAIR
54.4	Surfer Scientists
54.5	'Healthcheck' activates sustainability reporting
55.5	Cross sector collaboration grows circular economy
56.5	Creating Capability, Capacity & Culture Change
57.5	South-East Australian Coastal Ocean Forecast System
58.5	Coastal Observation Lab in a Box
60.5	Unraveling the dynamics of ocean soundscapes
61.5	Coastal & Marine Ecological Classification Std
62.5	Marine Management and Climate
63.5	Coastal Oxygen and Hypoxia in Asian waters
64.5	European Regional Hub for Blue Carbon
65.5	Shipwrecks as Artificial Reef Structures
66.5	Arctic Sea Ice Restoration
67.5	Climate resilience for fishing and aquaculture
68.5	Sargasso Sea Project
7.5	Ghost Fishing Solutions
70.5	Enhancing Estuary Resilience in Coastal BC
71.5	Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Blue Economy
72.5	Elite Centre of Aquatic Nature-based Solutions
81.4	Coalizão Paraná pela Década do Oceano
82.4	Popular observatory of the sea - Amazon coast
84.4	Plastic oceans - Monitoring the plastic
85.4	Technologies to extract microplastics from the sea
87.4	Observadores da Natureza para o Desenvolvimento Ambiental das Ilhas Oceânicas
88.4	Recycling on the development of sensor for oceans
89.4	InterAntar - Mediação das ciências polares
92.4	Hyperspectral sensing of coastal soils
94.4	Sustainability as Solutions to Marine Litter
95.4	Sustainable Technologies to Improve Water Supply
96.4	Brazilian Tropical Estuaries Monitoring
97.4	Blue University of the Brazilian coast
WA01	Advancing predictions of marine heatwaves
WA02	Yagarrajalajalan Nagula Buru

## Endorsed Contributions

Reference number	Name of Decade Action
17.5	ICRI Plan of Action 2021 - 2024
18.5	Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform
59.4	Ocean Acoustics Education and Expertise
79.4	Unpath'd Waters
144.2	US Tsunami Contributions to IOC Tsunami Pt 1
145.2	US Tsunami Contributions to IOC Tsunami Pt 2
524	Preventing ocean plastic in rivers
529	LCC The Climate Academy x The Ocean Decade Brief
531	The Sea as a Good Cause in support to the OD
534	Mediterranean Green Shipping Centre of Excellence
536	Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature Grants
538	JPI Oceans Joint Call: Changing Marine Lightscapes
817	Decade Collaborative Centre for the Pacific Islands Region of the Pacific Ocean (DCC-PIR-PO)
818	Decade Implementing Partner One Ocean Hub
819	National Research Council Canada – Ocean Program
59.5	EuroMarine Outlook on International Ocean Programs
69.5	ArtWaves: Fusion of Marine Biodiversity and Art
820	European Global Ocean Observing System (EuroGOOS)
821	Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech) and the Preparing Shenzhen Ocean University (SOU)





## Registered UN Actions

Reference number	Name of endorsed Decade Action
UN34	Decade Coordination Office for Connecting People and Ocean
UN35	Harmful Algae Bloom Solutions
UN36	SEAWARD Africa
UN37	Ocean Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning

**For further information**  
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