



2021
2030 United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

Cities with the Ocean

Call to Action

Preamble

- We the mayors and governors, officials and representatives of coastal cities worldwide, port executives, ocean science expertsⁱ, private companies and regional and international civil society organizations convening in Barcelona for the UN Ocean Decade Conference 2024.
- We acknowledge the profound socio-economic impact of the ocean and the integral role it plays in meeting the essential needs of the inhabitants of coastal territories—health, food, wellbeing, sustainable livelihoods, culture, and more. The ocean, often unseen, shaped the history and identity of coastal territories, from climate to human settlements, to economy and culture. It holds the key to attracting new inhabitants, businesses, and tourists and is an essential asset for the future of these territories.
- However, the ocean also poses significant threats to coastal territories, such as sea level rise, storm surges, tsunamis, and coastal erosion—risks exacerbated by global warming. In addition, rapid urban growth has compromised marine ecosystems, notably through pollution, habitat destruction, overfishing and excessive sand exploitation.
- We recognize that coastal cities are now in the frontline of the climate and biodiversity crisis and might in the future lose a significant part of the benefits provided by the ocean, while facing increasing threats.
- We are willing to act together. Coastal cities and ports are crucial hubs to develop and implement solutions for sustainable development, for the benefit of their inhabitants and local stakeholders, as well as to address global climate and biodiversity challenges.
- We believe in sustainable cities and ports and consider that Sustainable Development Goals 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and 14 “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” go hand in hand and are closely connected to SDG13 “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact” and the entire Sustainable Development Agenda.
- We want to seize the opportunity of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Developmentⁱⁱ, to mobilize ocean science, data and knowledge to meet the challenges of coastal cities and ports, including increasing their resilience to climate change and improving the living conditions and well-being of their inhabitants.

For more information:

Ocean Decade
oceansdecade.org

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We mayors, governors and ports executives,

- We strive to build a harmonious co-existence between cities and the ocean to achieve sustainability and resilience. We commit to better consider and assess this relation, to preserve, restore and enhance the benefits provided by the ocean and adapt to the increasing threats.
- We will consider the ocean in all our policies and plans and develop a cross-cutting approach involving all sectors of the local government and all our stakeholders while aligning to national, regional and global action.
- In particular, we commit to:
 - increase our ocean literacy, as well as that of our administrations, of practitioners, stakeholders and inhabitants, taking into consideration science-based, indigenous and traditional knowledge;
 - question and evaluate our relationship with the ocean in all its dimensions, in a systemic and trans-disciplinary approach that benefits society;
 - take better account of the ocean in all relevant public policies and plans and connect ocean action with other agendas such as sustainable urbanization, climate action and biodiversity, and our entire Agenda 2030;
 - support the development of a sustainable and inclusive local blue economy; sustainable land-sea planning, climate action and nature-based solutions;
 - involve all stakeholders to overcome tensions and achieve solutions of mutual benefit;
 - work with other levels to develop national, regional and global momentum;
 - share our experience and learn from each other;
 - facilitate the co-design and implementation of science-based actions within the framework of the Ocean Decade;
 - promote ocean and city innovation hubs and entrepreneurship;
 - promote an evidence-based integrated approach to ocean, cities and ports to mitigate and adapt to climate change during negotiation processes, i.e. UNFCCC.

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- We need ocean science to inform the daily management of our cities and our ports as well as our strategic planning for the decades to come.
- This science should be accessible to us, to urban practitioners and to all our stakeholders, be actionable and provide fit-for-purpose solutions to our local challenges.

We Decade Actions

- We are involved in the Ocean Decade to produce transformative ocean science that has a tangible contribution to the sustainable development of human communities.
- We are willing to understand and address the specific vision, ambition, challenges and needs of coastal territories and commit to
 - co-design, co-produce and co-deliver fit-for-purpose knowledge and solutions, with national and local governments and multiple stakeholders;
 - work across disciplines, including natural, health, behavioral and social science, socioecology, economics and land use planning;
 - apply and downscale the understanding, measuring and prediction of the global ocean to coastal areas, to support local action;
 - open the data and knowledge we produce and facilitating access and understanding by all stakeholders, making sure it can inform decision and action, contribute to the transparency of local action and impact assessment;
 - contribute to strengthening the ocean literacy of decision makers, practitioners and the general public;
 - contribute to capacity development of all local stakeholders, notably through the sharing of best practices, guidance and training.

Together

- We are willing to take part in a global movement to collaborate, to share experience, to innovate, to co-design science and co-create solutions with our inhabitants, businesses, stakeholders, and science institutions locally and across the world, to inform and support local action.

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- We strongly support the launch a new “Cities with the Ocean” Platform that builds on the Ocean Decade framework to bring together decision-makers, practitioners, communities and the various stakeholders of cities and the international ocean science community.
- We call to other coastal cities and ports around the world to join the Cities with the Ocean platform.
- We call to the ocean science community to join and co-design with us the science we need for the cities we want.
- We commit to working with existing networks and initiatives of cities and ports and invite them to join, to build on their experience and achievements, embrace their needs and collaborate to disseminate solutions.
- We call on national, regional and global institutions to support this effort and fully involve coastal cities and ports in the management of the coastal ocean and all relevant policy sectors. In particular, we call for strengthened coordination with national coastal policies, climate and biodiversity policies and nationally determined commitments.
- Together, we will ensure that coastal cities and ports will become “Cities with the Ocean”, fully aware of the richness of their relationship with the ocean, and able to mobilize scientific knowledge to preserve the ocean's vitality and reap its full benefits. In this way, the ocean will remain a strong determinant of their identity and an essential partner in their future prosperity.

ⁱ For the purposes of the Decade of the Ocean, “ocean science” encompasses all the disciplines that contribute to our knowledge of the ocean and the relationship between man and the ocean, including both natural and social science.

ⁱⁱ The Ocean Decade provides a global convening framework to foster the partnerships and develop the scientific knowledge needed to catalyze transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development, connecting people and the ocean. More information on www.oceandecade.org

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