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Intergovernmental  
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Commission



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



# Action Plan

## for National Decade Committees

in support of the 2027 Ocean  
Decade Conference and  
the second half of the Decade





This Action Plan reflects the shared ambition and collective commitment of all National Decade Committees (NDCs) to play an active, strategic, and solution-oriented role in the second half of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 ('Ocean Decade'). It is closely aligned with the recommendations and follow-up actions emerging from the Ocean Decade Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE), which underscored the importance of strengthening national-level engagement and coordination mechanisms to ensure that the Decade's vision translates into tangible action across all regions. The MTE highlighted the need to enhance the visibility, connectivity, and effectiveness of NDCs within the broader Decade coordination ecosystem, recommending measures to improve communication, collaboration, and participation in decision-making processes.



Building on this momentum, as well as the guidance provided by the Barcelona Statement, this Action Plan highlights the leadership role of NDCs in driving national and regional implementation, and demonstrates the growing maturity of the NDC community and its readiness to contribute to a collective, transformative movement that connects the global vision of the Ocean Decade with national and local impact.



During the in-person meeting of National Decade Committees at the 2025 UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France, aboard the RV METEOR, participants discussed how to strengthen national and regional implementation of the Ocean Decade. Based on the breakout group discussions and strategic outlooks shared by NDCs, this Action Plan outlines a set of concrete next steps to guide collective efforts in the lead-up to the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and the second half of the Decade until 2030. This Plan presents four tangible actions that should be initiated before the end of 2025, as well as one overarching strategic enabler to ensure long-term political alignment and visibility of the Decade at national levels.







# OVERALL STRATEGIC GOALS

## of the NDC community for the period 2025-2030

This Action Plan reflects the growing maturity and ambition of the NDC community. It is intended to support national-level leadership while reinforcing the collective power of coordinated global implementation.

The four concrete action areas outlined on the following pages contribute to a broader set of shared goals that define the collective direction of NDCs:

- Strengthen the visibility and impact of the Ocean Decade at the national and regional levels.
- Enhance alignment between national implementation and global Decade ambitions.
- Improve meaningful engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders, including youth, Indigenous and local communities, and the private sector.
- Support the co-design of Decade Actions that are responsive to national contexts and contribute to the implementation of the Ocean Decade aligning with the overall Sustainable Development Goals.
- Ensure that NDCs play an active role in shaping the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference as a milestone moment in global ocean governance.
- Lay the foundation for sustained political, institutional, and financial support for ocean science and policy through to 2030 and beyond.
- Update national strategy documents in alignment with Ocean Decade aims.



# 1 | REGIONAL NDC MEETINGS

## with rotating leadership

The first action focuses on strengthening regional cooperation. Regional NDC meetings will be organized in collaboration with Decade Collaborative Centres (DCCs), Decade Coordination Offices (DCOs), and regional Taskforces where they exist, with leadership rotating among participants. Each meeting will be convened by a different NDC or DCC/DCO from within the region. These meetings will provide a dedicated space for peer learning, regional coordination, and the exchange of shared priorities, fostering alignment, and mutual support.

The outcomes of these regional meetings will be summarized and shared in the regular global coordination calls of NDCs and DCCs/DCOs. For successful implementation of this meeting series, suitable NDC or DCC/DCO focal points will champion the lead in organizing specific sessions in their region with support from the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU). The geographic scope and structure of each region will be identified by the respective NDCs and DCCs/DCOs based on shared needs and benefits, with support from the DCU. Meetings will be thematically focused

to ensure constructive dialogue. Potential topics may include operational challenges commonly faced by NDCs or scientific barriers related to the [10 Ocean Decade Challenges](#). These themes will remain flexible and can be refined as the initiative evolves, and feedback is gathered through initial rounds of implementation.

A first example of a regional meeting was the African NDCs Webinar in September 2025. African NDCs were invited to participate in an interactive session with the renewed [African Taskforce](#) and the [DCO for the African Region and Adjacent Island States](#). The outcomes will be shared with the global NDC community. The meeting highlighted the value of strengthened collaboration and transparency between regional structures, including the DCO, DCC, and Taskforce, to ensure coherent and coordinated implementation across the Decade network. Building on this positive experience, similar regional meetings are planned over the coming year to further enhance communication, alignment, and shared learning among Decade coordination structures.





## 2 | WORKSHOPS to prepare for the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference

The second action is the organization of national, regional, and global workshops—held either in-person or online—to co-develop and prepare the contributions of NDCs to the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference in line with the preparatory process framework prepared by the DCU. While the regular regional NDC meetings described in the first action focus on ongoing peer learning and coordination, these workshops serve a distinct and time-bound purpose: to align priorities and shape visible, strategic contributions to this major global milestone. Taking place in late 2025 and during 2026, the workshops will specifically focus on preparing NDC inputs for the Conference. Existing events—such as national conferences, regional forums, or webinars—can be leveraged as platforms to convene groups of NDCs for these workshops. NDCs are encouraged to identify and share

opportunities for such gatherings so that, together with the DCU, the global NDC community can align on timing and locations that maximize participation and impact.

These workshops also aim to strengthen the visibility of national and regional Decade implementation efforts. To ensure broad and inclusive engagement, NDCs should involve a diverse range of stakeholders, including representatives of endorsed Decade Actions, the scientific and policy communities, youth, Indigenous peoples, and local communities.

The outcomes will be compiled and shared with the DCU to inform and enrich the planning of the 2027 Conference and ensure a strong visibility of NDCs at the Conference, reinforcing the strategic role of NDCs in shaping the global narrative of the Ocean Decade.





# 3 | Continued peer learning and a practical Stakeholder Engagement TOOLKIT

The third action focuses on strengthening stakeholder engagement across the Decade, with particular emphasis on sharing best practices among NDCs and enhancing collaboration with the private sector. Building on the existing series of virtual NDC meetings, which will continue to serve as a regular space for peer exchange, this action aims to translate lessons learned into practical tools for broader use. A key output will be a concise Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit, the development of which is already underway as of August 2025.

The Toolkit will draw from the existing [Best Practice Manual for NDCs](#) and incorporate real-world examples and guidance from diverse national contexts. It will include dedicated sections on effective strategies for engaging key stakeholder groups, particularly private sector actors, in ocean science and sustainable development—drawing on successful approaches already tested within the NDC community. In contrast to the first and second actions, which focus on coordination and milestone preparation respectively, this action is centered on capacity-building and resource development, supporting NDCs in strengthening their national impact over the long term.





# 4

## POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT through the Guidance to implement the Ocean Decade Vision 2030 at national level

The fourth action is a broader strategic measure aimed at strengthening political engagement with the Ocean Decade at the national level. It is anchored in the development of the Guidance to Implement the Ocean Decade Vision 2030 at National Level, a knowledge product designed with NDCs and to support NDCs in connecting global ambitions with national priorities. The drafting of this Guidance is already underway as of August 2025 and is being shaped through an inclusive and iterative process. A group of volunteering NDCs is actively contributing their expertise by reviewing successive drafts and providing valuable input based on their national experiences.

In contrast to the first three actions—which focus on concrete implementation steps such as meetings, workshops, and the development of practical toolkits—this Guidance has a different scope. It serves as a strategic enabler that can be adapted by NDCs to their unique national contexts. As a knowledge product, it offers a flexible framework and entry points for aligning national ocean science planning with the Decade's global vision.

NDCs are encouraged to use the guidance to engage Member States in national ocean science dialogues. For instance, the guidance can serve as the basis for convening policy-oriented workshops at national or subnational levels. These workshops may be tailored to specific ocean challenges relevant to each context, such as marine spatial planning, coastal resilience, early warning systems, or the sustainable ocean economy. The Guidance will provide practical advice on translating the Decade Outcomes and Challenges into national ocean science strategies. In doing so, it can support deeper political commitment and help bridge the gap between global Decade goals and nationally-driven implementation.

This is strongly encouraged also through the Mid-Term Evaluation Action Plan based on feedback from diverse stakeholder in the Decade to expand efforts in the development of knowledge products. This will contribute to the global discussion on improved efficiency and effectiveness of investment in ocean science and widely communicate on the role of the Ocean Decade in this area of work.



# ▼ MILESTONES

to be achieved for review just  
after the 2027 Ocean Decade  
Conference



1

All regions have hosted at least one regional meeting in successful collaboration between the DCCs/DCOs, Taskforce



2

Workshops took place using existing events to shape the programme of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference (aligned with the Ocean Decade 2027 Conference Concept Note)



3

NDC contributions showcased during the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference



4

Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit in active use by NDCs



5

Use cases presented at the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference



6

Guidance officially launched



7

Examples compiled on how the Guidance was used to influence national policy



8

Increased political visibility and recognition of NDCs in national strategies



9

Updates to national ocean science strategies aligned with Vision 2030