Oceans Day at the UNFCCC COP 21 Paris

December 4, 2015, Rio Conventions Pavilion, Le Bourget

BACKGROUND

The Global Ocean Forum, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/UNESCO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Ocean Policy Research Institute/Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan, the University of Delaware, and the Ocean and Climate Platform, together with the 38 co-organizers noted in Box 1 (p.2,3), are organizing the Oceans Day at COP 21 in Paris. The purpose of the Oceans Day is to advance the oceans and climate change agenda at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 21) and beyond.

In cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, the Oceans Day at COP 21 will be held in the Rio Conventions Pavilion (in the Civil Society Zone) at the UNFCCC COP 21 on Friday, December 4, 2015. The Rio Pavilion is a joint effort of the CBD, the UNFCCC, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Other thematic days will also take place in the Rio Pavilion. The venue is expected to accommodate 350 people.

The Oceans Day at COP 21 builds on previous UNFCCC Oceans Days--Oceans Day in Copenhagen (UNFCCC COP 15, 2009); Oceans Day in Cancun (UNFCCC COP 16, 2010), and Oceans Day in Durban (UNFCCC COP 17, 2011)--as well as on the Oceans Day at Rio+20, and the outcome of the World Ocean Day (8 June 2015) organized by IOC/UNESCO and the Ocean and Climate Platform 2015 held at UNESCO in Paris. This international event, attended by more than 1000 participants representing IGOs, NGOs, the research community, the private sector and high level country representatives (including several heads of state), concluded with the adoption of the Ocean Call for the Climate from the Ocean and Climate Platform with a view to mobilizing the international community on the essential role of a healthy ocean for adapting and mitigating present and future climate change.

Rationale

Climate change is the most important issue of our time. Oceans and climate are intertwined, with oceans driving climate and climate change affecting ocean health and coastal and island peoples. Oceans cycle over 93% of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, produce 50% of the oxygen we breathe, store 50% of all naturally sequestered carbon, and absorb 90% of the heat added to the global system in the past 200
Box 1. Oceans Day at COP 21 Organizers and Co-Organizers

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<th>ORGANIZERS</th>
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<td>Global Ocean Forum</td>
<td>Government of Grenada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/UNESCO</td>
<td>Government of Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan</td>
<td>Government of Seychelles, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Delaware, Gerard J. Mangone Center for Marine Policy</td>
<td>Government of Sweden, Ministry of Environment</td>
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<td>Ocean and Climate Platform</td>
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<td>Global Environment Facility</td>
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<td>Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat</td>
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<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>GEF/UNDP/UNEP African Large Marine Ecosystem Projects</td>
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<td>International Atomic Energy Agency</td>
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<td>Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat</td>
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<td>Secretariat of the Pacific Community</td>
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<td>Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme</td>
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<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>World Meteorological Organization</td>
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<th>Non-Governmental Organizations/Foundations (National/International)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal &amp; Marine Union (EUCC)</td>
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<td>Forum do Mar, Brazil</td>
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<td>Global Island Partnership</td>
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<td>Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI, France)</td>
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Box 1. Oceans Day at COP 21 Organizers and Co-Organizers, continued.

Non-Governmental Organizations/Foundations, continued (National/International)

- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Partnership for Climate, Fisheries, and Aquaculture
- Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- World Ocean Network
- World Ocean Observatory
- World Wide Fund for Nature

Academic/Scientific Institutions

- Center for Coastal Studies, Provincetown, Mass., USA
- Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France
- Duke University, Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions
- Global Change Institute, University of Queensland
- Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Mexico
- Monmouth University, Urban Coast Institute
- Plymouth Marine Laboratory
- Turkish Marine Research Foundation
- Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego
- Tara Expeditions

years. The resulting effects of climate change on oceans will impact all world inhabitants, whether from a developing or developed State or from a coastal or landlocked State. The oceans are critical as a food source and play a major role in global trade (oceans support 90% of the global trade via shipping). Oceans, seas, and coastal areas are experiencing an increased frequency and intensity of climate extremes, including stronger hurricanes, typhoons, and cyclones. Changes in ocean chemistry and temperature are causing ocean acidification, sea level rise, and fluctuations in ocean circulation and salinity. Coastal populations and small island developing States (SIDS) and other island jurisdictions will be most affected by climate change and typically have insufficient resources to combat these changes.

The global oceans community supports and urges States Parties and observers to the UNFCCC climate negotiations to reach an ambitious legally binding agreement at the COP 21 in Paris in December 2015 adopting stringent and immediate reductions in CO₂ emissions. This is essential to ensure the continuing functioning of the oceans in sustaining life on earth, and to avoid disastrous consequences on oceans and on coastal and SIDS communities around the world.
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<th>Confirmed High-Level Speakers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>H.S.H. Prince Albert II</strong>, Sovereign Prince of Monaco</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell</strong>, Prime Minister of Grenada</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>H.E. Mr. Karmenu Vella</strong>, Commissioner on Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission</td>
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<td><strong>H.E. Mme Ségoûne Royal</strong>, Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, France</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias</strong>, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ms. Paula Caballero</strong>, Senior Director, Environment and Natural Resources Global Practice, World Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dame Meg Taylor</strong>, Secretary-General, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr. Hashali Hamukuaya</strong>, Executive Secretary, Benguela Current Commission, GEF/UNDP/UNEP African Large Marine Ecosystem Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr. Vladimir Ryabinin</strong>, Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/UNESCO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>H.E. Mr. Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.</strong>, President, Republic of Palau</td>
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<td><strong>H.E. Ms. Mary Robinson</strong>, UN Special Envoy on Climate Change</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr. Naoko Ishii</strong>, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>H.E. Mr. Greg Hunt MP</strong>, Minister for the Environment, Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr. Irina Bokova</strong>, Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>H.E. Mr. Ronald Jumeau</strong>, Ambassador for Climate Change and Small Island Developing State Issues, Seychelles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mr. Luke Daunivalu</strong>, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Fiji, Member, SIDS, UNFCCC Adaptation Committee</td>
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<td><strong>H.E. Dr. Angus Friday</strong>, Ambassador to the United States, Grenada</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>H.E. Ms. Ngedikes Olai Uludong</strong>, Ambassador to the European Union and Ambassador on Climate Change, Republic of Palau</td>
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Who Will be Involved in the Oceans Day at COP 21?

High-level leaders from governments (from developing, SIDS, and developing countries), international organizations, regional organizations, and civil society, will be featured in all the panels.

Confirmed high-level speakers as of October 26, 2015 are noted in Box 2 (p.4).

Purpose

The Oceans Day at COP 21 will advance the climate and ocean agenda at COP 21 and beyond. The major objectives are to:

-- Highlight the major climate and oceans issues, with emphasis on the impacts on the most vulnerable peoples and ecosystems, and suggest next steps, both within and outside the UNFCCC framework

-- Foster political leadership and move forward on the major climate and oceans solutions with the engagement of high-level leaders around the world

-- Catalyze and share solutions as part of the global portfolio of actions

-- Consider and move forward on a five-year strategic plan on oceans and climate to guide policy and action

Format of the Meeting

The Oceans Day will be one-day in duration—Friday, December 4, 2015, from 9:00 AM to 6:30 PM. The meeting will be held in plenary. About 350 people can be accommodated, with preference given to UNFCCC Parties and Observer Organizations. Participants must be registered (https://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/registration-form-oceans-day-at-cop-211.pdf) by November 24, 2015.

High-level speakers will be included in the program throughout the day, in all the panels.

Exhibits/Materials

Relevant organizations are invited to contribute exhibits or other materials related to the major themes of the Oceans Day at COP 21. Please contact Ms. Erica Wales at ewales@udel.edu
Draft Program and Panels for Oceans Day at COP 21, December 4, 2015

For each of the major climate and oceans topics, speakers are asked to:

1) Evaluate where we are on the issue (status of the issue)
2) Note what opportunities are available within and outside the UNFCCC to move forward on the issue
3) Define the next steps on each issue, both within and outside the UNFCCC
4) Showcase examples of successful policy measures or experiences in specific cases

9:00-10:15 AM

Panel 1. Setting the Stage: The Climate and Oceans Context—Challenges and Opportunities

High-level leaders present the imperative of recognizing, and acting on, the central role of oceans in planetary survival and in human economic and social well-being, in the global context of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on Oceans and Seas, the 2014 SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, and other developments in the global agenda.

Leaders speak about the problems as well as the opportunities that lie ahead such as Blue Economy approaches emphasizing renewable energy.

The policy brief summarizing findings by the international working group to develop a strategic five-year action plan on oceans and climate is presented.

This panel will also feature presentation of the major findings emanating from the June 8, 2015 World Ocean Day and the Ocean Call for the Climate (organized by the IOC/UNESCO, the Ocean and Climate Platform, and other sponsors), and from the Ocean and Climate Forum (organized by the Ocean and Climate Platform to be held on December 3, 2015 in the Civil Society zone (date TBC)).

10:15-10:30 COFFEE BREAK

10:30-11:45 AM

Panel 2. Addressing the Effects of Climate Change on Oceans and on Coastal and SIDS Populations: The Scientific Evidence, Scenarios, and Choices for Decisionmakers

The challenges oceans and coastal and SIDS populations are facing due to climate change, including choices for decision-makers, are highlighted, featuring leaders and noted natural and social scientists.

The environment/people issues, challenges, and opportunities, are illustrated, using some salient examples:

- Fisheries and food security
- Responses to ocean warming and acidification
- Blue Economy approaches

11:45 AM-1:00 PM

Panel 3. Mitigation and the Oceans

Leaders address how to accelerate mitigation of CO2 emissions, and evaluate, accelerate, and finance promising mitigation efforts relevant to the oceans, coastal areas, and SIDS and other island jurisdictions. Two stage-setting presentations start off this panel: The first one provides an overview of the major issues related to Mitigation and Oceans, the second provides an overview of the financing challenges, options, and opportunities, since financing is essential to all topics related to climate and oceans—mitigation, adaptation, capacity development, scientific monitoring, and outreach to the public and decisionmakers.

- Achieve stringent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to avoid disastrous consequences on coastal communities, marine ecosystems, and ocean chemistry;
- Accelerate efforts to reduce emissions from marine industries, including efforts by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and others;
- Conserve and sustainably manage coastal ecosystems (e.g., mangroves, seagrass beds, salt marshes) as major carbon sinks, and further integrate the management of the coastal carbon ecosystems (Coastal Blue Carbon) into the policy and financing processes of the UNFCCC as a major tool for climate change mitigation;
- Sustainably develop ocean-based renewable energy (such as offshore wind power, wave energy, tidal power, and aquatic biofuels); and accelerate efforts to implement these approaches through integrated marine planning and enhanced regulatory frameworks;
- Consider, and, if appropriate, further develop regulatory systems for carbon capture and storage using the oceans;
- Examine assessments of the costs of ocean-based mitigation; for example, costs to integrate Blue Carbon into coastal and ocean management, costs of mitigation efforts by the shipping industry, costs of renewable energy, and costs of carbon capture and storage;
- Obtain sufficient financing to support a range of mitigation measures using the oceans, through integrated coastal and ocean management institutions, as appropriate.

1:00-2:00 LUNCH

2:00-3:15 PM

Panel 4. Adaptation and Financing for Adaptation

Leaders address how to ensure successful adaptation efforts, at what costs, and with what financing.
Implement ecosystem-based adaptation strategies through integrated coastal and ocean management institutions at national, regional, and local levels to reduce vulnerability of human settlements and build the management capacity, preparedness, resilience, and adaptive capacities of coastal and island communities;

-- Apply innovative approaches to coastal defense, especially for green infrastructure to provide natural system protection for defense against sea level rise, storms, and flooding;

-- Promote and apply Blue Economy approaches with emphasis on low-carbon solutions and economic benefits to developing countries and SIDS (following SDG target 14.7);

-- Establish and effectively manage networks of marine protected areas to protect marine biodiversity and to enhance resilience of marine ecosystems to climate change, with the aim of achieving the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Aichi Biodiversity Target of conserving at least 10% of marine and coastal areas by 2020. Ensure scientific monitoring of MPAs and resilience to climate change processes;

-- Develop and support measures to address the issues associated with the displacement and resilience of coastal and island populations as a result of climate change. Identify what financing measures need to be developed and supported to address the issues associated with the displacement of coastal and island populations as a result of climate change;

-- Examine assessments of the costs of adaptation in coastal countries and in small island developing States (SIDS) to inform planning and implementation of adaptation programs. Existing estimates of the costs of adaptation in coastal areas and SIDS have been found to underestimate the investment needed, and to be fragmented and incomplete. For example, most cost estimates for sea level rise focus on infrastructure damage but do not address saltwater intrusion in coastal aquifers and the destruction of habitats that support fisheries and aquaculture;

-- Consider how to ensure the provision of sufficient funding to support adaptation for coastal and island communities that are at the frontline of climate change in 183 coastal countries and SIDS, considering the creation of a special coastal adaptation fund, directing a significant portion of the current climate funds to coastal and SIDS issues, also developing alternative forms of financing.

Panel 5. Capacity Development, Scientific Monitoring, and Public Education

Leaders address financing of capacity development for mitigation and adaptation measures related to oceans and coastal and SIDS communities as essential elements of success, including the building of scientific monitoring capacity, management capacity, and public education

-- Provide technical and financial assistance to SIDS and developing countries to build capacity to implement mitigation and adaptation measures, early warning systems, and disaster risk reduction, in the context of integrated coastal and marine planning and management;

-- Enhance scientific capacity in all countries for marine environmental assessment, monitoring, and prediction, including the implementation of a global ocean acidification observing network as part of the global ocean observing system;

-- Expand public outreach and education efforts to enhance public understanding of the ocean’s role in planetary survival and in global and national well-being, of the risks posed to SIDS and coastal communities by climate change and to catalyze support for mitigation and adaptation responses, echoing the call on education and awareness-raising made by the Lima Declaration on Education and Awareness-raising (COP 20, 2014);

-- Improve awareness and understanding among policymakers, especially at the UNFCCC and other high-level decision making bodies, of the importance of oceans and climate issues and the need to take bold policy measures to avoid disastrous impacts on the world’s coastal and island communities.

Panel 6. Bringing it All Together: A Five-Year Agenda for Action

Leaders present the way forward on the challenges and solutions, and on mobilizing the political will and the financing that will be needed to implement the solutions effectively.

Next steps for priority oceans and climate issues, including mitigation, adaptation, financing, capacity development, public education, and scientific monitoring, are outlined.

The Ocean and Climate Platform will present the collected signatures on the Ocean Call for the Climate to the assembled leaders.

Policy Brief and Strategic Action Plan on Oceans and Climate Issues

An international working group, composed of participants from the organizing and co-organizing entities of Oceans Day at COP 21, is preparing a policy brief, to be available to all Oceans Day at COP 21 participants, providing
information on the major oceans and climate issues and on possible courses of action for their resolution/advancement, and charting a strategic action plan for the next five years. The end result of the Oceans Day at COP 21 will be a strategic action plan to take the oceans/climate agenda forward, within and outside of the UNFCCC, in the next five years. The plan will focus on priority oceans and climate issues, including mitigation, adaptation, financing, capacity development, public education, and scientific monitoring.

Meeting Reports

Arrangements will be made for reporting by the Earth Negotiations Bulletin. A summary report will be produced, including the strategic oceans/climate plan. A press conference will also be held.

Coordination with Other Ocean Events

In addition to the Oceans Day at COP 21, the following major ocean events are planned:

- **Ocean and Climate Forum** (civil society space at COP 21) on Thursday, December 3, organized by the Ocean and Climate Platform

- **Speaking with the Media in collaboration with Place to B**, Saturday, December 5 (in Paris);

- **Armada for the Climate, Sunday, December 6**, Paris, on the Seine, near Le Petit and Le Grand Palais and the Pont Alexandre III, visit the Tara ship and other boats, other water-oriented activities for UNFCCC delegates

- **UNFCCC Side Event on Oceans and Climate, Monday, December 7, 2015**, organized by the Global Ocean Forum and partners

As well, the Global Ocean Forum and the Oceans and Climate Platform will put together a list of other ocean-related activities and side events taking place at COP 21 for public distribution to achieve maximum synergy among all the efforts focusing on the central role of oceans, coasts, and SIDS in the climate negotiations. To add an event to the list, please contact Dr. Miriam Balgos (miriambalgos@globaloceans.org) and Ludovic Frere Escoffier (secretariat@ocean-climate.org).

For more information on Oceans Day at COP 21 Paris, please contact Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain (bilianacicinsain@globaloceans.org) or Dr. Miriam Balgos (miriambalgos@globaloceans.org).

For information on past Oceans Days, please see:

Oceans Day in Copenhagen: [http://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/summary.pdf](http://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/summary.pdf)

Oceans Day in Cancun: [http://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/cancun_summary.pdf](http://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/cancun_summary.pdf)

Oceans Day in Durban: [http://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/gofdurbansummary-2.pdf](http://globaloceanforumdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/gofdurbansummary-2.pdf)