

# REGULAR PROCESS NEWSLETTER

The Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment  
of the State of the Marine Environment, including  
Socioeconomic Aspects



Credit: Tracey Jennings / Ocean Image Bank

## Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of the United Nations Regular Process Newsletter.

The United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) is launching the newsletter as a bi-annual update on the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process. The newsletter aims to increase awareness of and engagement with the Regular Process as well as enable continuous and collective learning on the world's oceans by improving communication with and exchange of information between the stakeholders of the Regular Process.

In this newsletter, you will have a chance to meet some members of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process (GOE), consider a call for States to host regional workshops, and learn about the launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment. You will also find an overview of the 15th meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process and learn about the GOE's participation at the IPBES-8 Plenary.

Please let us know if you would like to contribute or see something included in future issues of the Regular Process newsletter. Happy reading!

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### CALL TO HOST REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

*The Secretariat invites States to consider a call to host regional workshops and to inform of their intent as early as possible. See **page 2** for further details.*



# Call to host regional workshops

Credit: Romeo, UN World Oceans Day Photo Competition

The General Assembly, in its resolution 75/239, recognized the need for early preparation for regional workshops as outlined in the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process, and invited States to consider hosting such workshops and inform the secretariat of their intent as early as possible.

The following regional workshops will be organized during the third cycle:

1. Two rounds of five regional workshops in **support of the implementation of the third cycle of the regular process**. The first round will tentatively be held between April and December 2022, with a view to, inter alia, informing the scoping exercise and the development of annotated outline(s) for the assessment(s) of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects, collecting regional-level data, raising awareness and generating interest from the scientific community in contributing to the drafting of the assessment(s). The second round is tentatively scheduled to be held between April and December 2023, with a view to, inter alia, raising awareness, collecting regional-level data for the drafting of the assessment(s), preparing draft chapter outlines and facilitating discussions of the writing teams on the drafting of chapters.

2. Five three-day regional workshops on **capacity-building for strengthening the ocean science-policy interface** from 2022 to 2023 with one for each of the five regions: 1) the North Pacific; 2) the South Pacific; 3) the Indian Ocean (including the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal), the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and the ROPME/RECOFI area; 4) the North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea; and 5) the South Atlantic (between the African and American coasts) and the wider Caribbean. Specific objectives and desired outcomes of these regional workshops will be developed according to regional needs in consultation with partner organizations. Agendas are expected to include presentations and interactive discussions on the challenges, opportunities, best practices and lessons learned for strengthening the ocean science-policy interface and on the application of an integrated approach.

Regional workshops will be conducted in person where the COVID-19 pandemic situation permits. Intergovernmental organizations would be able to co-host or support these regional workshops.

States interested in hosting a regional workshop, and intergovernmental organizations interested in co-hosting or supporting a regional workshop, are invited to contact the secretariat at [DOALOS@un.org](mailto:DOALOS@un.org) or Elena Temnova [temnova@un.org](mailto:temnova@un.org).



## FOREWORD

The Group of Experts of the Regular Process (GOE) includes scientists and ocean experts from each regional grouping of UN Member States appointed based on their knowledge and expertise in different fields. Their contribution is needed to analyze and evaluate the challenges faced by our oceans whose health is a *sine qua non* requirement for the survival of humans and civilization as we know it.

During its third cycle, the Regular Process will continue to help provide a clear picture of the status and trends of the oceans, the main threats they face, and the possible outcomes of different courses of action to mitigate these threats. The GOE reports to an Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of the General Assembly. Thus, it is in a position to draw to the attention of the most significant policy-making body of the UN the results that might be expected for us and future generations from the decisions we make concerning the marine environment.



**DR. CARLOS GARCIA-SOTO**

JOINT COORDINATOR OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS: PROFESSOR OF SATELLITE OCEANOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY; SPANISH NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (CSIC)



**DR. ENRIQUE R MARSCHOFF**

JOINT COORDINATOR OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS. PHD BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BUENOS AIRES

The job in front of us cannot, because of its magnitude, be discharged solely by members of the GOE. The Regular Process also relies on a Pool of Experts made up of several hundred scientists and experts recruited from around the world. It will assist the GOE with the preparation of assessments of the state of the marine environment during the third cycle shedding light on different aspects of ocean health.

As in the two previous cycles of the Regular Process, the third cycle of assessments will be based on scientific research on the environmental, economic and social aspects of the world's oceans, thus providing a firm basis for policy action and strengthening the ocean science-policy interface at the national, regional and global level.

## Meet the experts

**Please describe your expertise and experience relating to the mandates of the Regular Process.**

*I'm a Costa Rican lawyer, with a PhD focusing on the Law of the Sea from the National University of Ireland, Galway. I completed the United Nations - Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programme, where my research addressed high seas governance in the Costa Rica Dome. I've also worked for NGOs and as an independent consultant on diverse marine and environmental topics. Currently, I'm a consultant for the High Seas Alliance, where I assist Latin American countries to coordinate on the negotiations for a new treaty on marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction at the United Nations. I'm also a post-doctoral Fellow researcher in the Empowering Women for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development programme; and I worked as the programme coordinator for the DOALOS programmes of assistance to meet the strategic capacity needs of developing states in the field of ocean governance and the law of the sea.*

**What motivates you in your role as a member of the GOE?**

*Coming from Costa Rica, a country where the relevance of conservation to ensure long-term sustainability of nature is embedded in our social structures, allows me to participate as a member of the GOE with that perspective. It also brings an opportunity to emphasize the crucial role of the ocean, as Costa Rica has advanced on land conservation strategies but it needs to improve on and deliver actions for the marine environment. The real urgency for transformational change is in front of us, and the role of the GOE to help streamline the science for decisionmakers to build and deliver policy actions, as well as strengthen ocean leadership, is a great motivation to be part of this group.*

**What hopes do you have for the third cycle of the Regular Process?**

*Awareness of the multiple threats to the marine environment and how they impact our daily lives should be a call to action for all. How we translate science into policy and improve our global community standards is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the ocean and its biodiversity. The third cycle of the Regular Process should offer practical information for decision-makers to use and support strengthened international cooperation and coordination to address the current challenges faced by the marine environment.*

**As a marine expert, what is a key finding from WOA II that you would like to share with policymakers and the general public?**

*The critical knowledge gap that exists for deep pelagic environments and areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) generally. ABNJ cover almost half of our planet, but they are poorly sampled and understood. This lack of information is a real challenge for communicating the significance of those ecosystems and their biodiversity and informing decision-making processes.*



**DR. MARIAMALIA RODRÍGUEZ CHAVES**

ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYER, OCEAN GOVERNANCE EXPERT

**Please describe your expertise and experience relating to the mandates of the Regular Process.**

I am a coastal processes specialist with an interest in shoreline morphodynamics, coastal erosion and flooding studies, sea level rise, coastal vulnerability and climate change, application of drone/video technology in coastal studies, and delta systems studies. I am involved in several projects, including the development of a master plan for the West African coast; subsidence studies in delta systems; transformational adaptation from sargassum in West Africa and the Caribbean; and sustainable and integrated ports development for developing nations to name a few. I am a member of the Expert Group of the High-Level Panel for Sustainable Ocean Economy; an Associate member of the UNESCO Land Subsidence International Initiative; and a technical advisor to the West African coast observation mission in addition to being a member of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process.

**What motivates you in your role as a member of the Group of Experts?**

Lack of reliable scientific data has influenced sustainable management of marine resources, especially in developing countries. Issues such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing are major threats to marine ecosystems. IUU, which persists in some countries due to weak management systems, undermines national efforts towards sustainable fisheries management and marine biodiversity conservation. The urgent need to preserve the marine ecosystem to enable it to continue to provide important services for present and future generations can be achieved through sustainable management backed by effective policies. Contributing to providing reliable scientific information, which will assist governments to develop effective marine policies to facilitate decision-making, is the motivation for my role in the GOE.



**PROF. KWASI APPEANING ADDO**  
PROFESSOR IN COASTAL PROCESSES AND DELTA STUDIES;  
DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION STUDIES,  
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**What hopes do you have for the third cycle of the Regular Process?**

The third cycle of the Regular Process will interact with other ocean-related intergovernmental processes, develop the capacities of States in strengthening the ocean science-policy interface at all levels, and prepare assessments with the final goal of strengthening decision-making at all levels. It is my hope that the third cycle of the Regular Process will be guided by the challenges of the previous cycles and produce an Assessment that meets the needs of the present generation and preserves marine resources for future generations.

**As a marine expert, what is a key finding from WOA II that you would like to share with policymakers and the general public?**

Poorly managed coastal development impacts marine and estuarine ecosystems significantly. Current approaches to managing coastal development around the world will have significant consequences for future generations if the 'business as usual' model is continued. In this scenario, it is projected that coastal development could be a high risk to coastal ecosystems, human populations, built infrastructure and economies. Coastal nations need to harmonize coastal development and protection with nature to ensure a more resilient marine environment.

**Please describe your expertise and experience relating to the mandates of the Regular Process.**

I am a scientific adviser with eight years of experience working both in academia and at the science-policy interface of environmental governance. As a scientific adviser, my main role at the Estonian Ministry of Environment is assisting ministry leadership in developing policies and making decisions that are based on sound science, and building national and international R&D environmental governance relations. On the marine side, I participate in the work of the European Commission Joint Programming Initiative Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans, and in the drafting of Horizon Europe candidate partnership "A climate neutral, sustainable and productive Blue Economy." I got my PhD in marine ecology at the University of Tartu working on the benthic suspension feeders and their role in controlling eutrophication. I then spent several years as a marine policy adviser at the Estonian Ministry of Environment, coordinating national implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive in Estonia.



**DR. KATARINA VIIK**  
SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR,  
ESTONIAN MINISTRY  
OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT

**What motivates you in your role as a member of the GOE?**

I am interested in maintaining and improving the quality of the marine environment and connecting with people who have a passion for science and nature protection.

**What hopes do you have for the third cycle of the Regular Process?**

The second cycle of the Regular Process was a great improvement on the first cycle; however, more work needs to be done to ensure a proper balance and attention to the important link between science and policy. I hope that the third cycle, building on the lessons learned from the second cycle, will be able to fully attain this important balance, providing a clearer connection between science and policy to support policy decisions for sustainable development of the oceans.

**As a marine expert, what is a key finding from WOA II that you would like to share with policymakers and the general public?**

Knowledge about oceans and marine ecosystems is improving each year thanks to new research and collection of data. However there are still a lot of knowledge gaps about the marine environment, as the system is highly complex, which is why we need to collaborate globally to make sense of it.



**DR. CHANG-IK ZHANG**  
PROFESSOR, FAO  
WORLD FISHERIES  
UNIVERSITY

*Please describe your expertise and experience relating to the mandates of the Regular Process.*

*I am Chang-Ik Zhang, Professor Emeritus at Pukyong National University since 2018, currently working as a professor of marine fisheries management at World Fisheries University in Korea. I have some experience working at international organizations, including as Chairman of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) and in high-level government policymaking processes as a Member of Presidential Commission on Policy Planning of Korea.*

*What motivates you in your role as a member of the GOE?*

*I have participated in writing teams for WOA I and II. Having recognized that many drivers have been negatively influencing the growth potential of socio-economic benefits from world oceans, I wanted to contribute my expertise to the third cycle more actively to help resolve those global issues.*

*What hopes do you have for the third cycle of the Regular Process?*

*I hope that the third cycle can contribute to progressing policymaking and capacity-building more effectively in support of healthy, productive and safe oceans.*

*As a marine expert, what is a key finding from WOA II that you would like to share with policymakers and the general public?*

*Most components of the ocean are impacted by inappropriate human use, and benefits from the ocean are at risk mainly due to a failure to achieve integrated management of activities and cumulative effects on ocean ecosystems. Therefore, holistic ecosystem approaches to management are essential and should be implemented as soon as possible.*

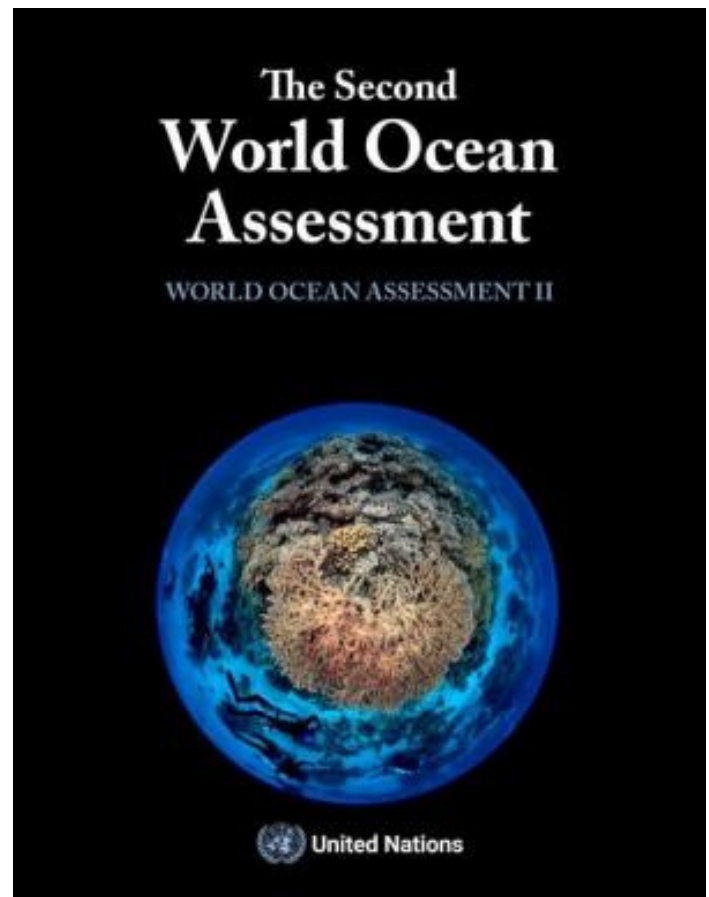
## Launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment

The Second World Ocean Assessment (WOA II) is a comprehensive overview of the state of the ocean and the relationship between the ocean and humans, covering environmental, social and economic aspects. It is the newest outcome of the only integrated assessments of the world's oceans at the global level along all three pillars of sustainable development.

On 21 April 2021, the United Nations launched WOA II with a virtual event featuring remarks of the Secretary-General and other key figures and experts in ocean affairs and highlighting the key findings of WOA II. You can watch the launch event here: <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/woa2>



Watch the promotional video "WOA II: Share the Knowledge" at: <https://vimeo.com/560490377>



# IMPACT OF THE WOA II LAUNCH EVENT

POTENTIAL REACH OF MORE THAN

## 20 Million

in the week following the launch

### UNITED NATIONS AMPLIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS

 **UN DESA Sustainable Development** @SustDev · 2m  
📢 The [#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) is launching on 21 April!  
В ООН напоминают о негативных последствиях деятельности человека для Мирового океана

 **United Nations** | **UN News**  
Global perspective Human stories

 unocedecade The [#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) is launched TODAY, ahead of [#EarthDay2021!](#)

联合国报告：海洋对于气候的调节作用正日益受到人类活动的破坏 

Ocean benefits increasingly undermined by human activity, UN assessment reveals  
Les bienfaits de l'océan sont de plus en plus compromis par l'activité humaine, selon une étude de l'ONU

महासागर से मिलने वाले लाभों पर मानवीय गतिविधियों का नकारात्मक असर

 **Unesco - Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission** ...  
 **António Guterres** @antonioguterres · Apr 22  
14h · 🌐 Our abuse of the ocean is having a devastating effect.

The [#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) is launched TODAY, ahead of

 **Nairobi Convention** @NCSecretariat · 7h  
The [#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) is launching on 21 April 2021! Spread the word on the only global integrated assessment of our ocean along all three pillars of sustainable development.  
Learn more: [un.org/regularprocess](#)

 **UN Environment Programme New York** @unepnyo · 1h ...  
Don't forget to join the [#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) launch event on 21 April 2021 at 10 a.m. EDT !!

### SELECT PRESS AND AMPLIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS

 **IMBeR** @imber\_ipo · 1h  
Launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment (WOA II) is happening tomorrow - April 21. Don't miss it! [un.org/regularprocess/](#)

 **CGIAR Research Program on Fish** ...  
17h · 🌐

 **bpbes** A Segunda Avaliação Mundial

 **Estonia in UN** @EstoniaUN · Apr 22  
[#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) has been launched! [#SDG14](#)

 **EU Maritime & Fish** econômicos e sociais. WOA II é um  
What a week for [#OurOcean](#) & international [#OceanGovernance!](#)  
◆ presentation of final recommendations for ocean

 **International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)** ...

 **Chinese Mission to UN** @Chinamission2un · 3h

 **EurOcean** @EurOceanCentre · 2h  
Don't miss tomorrow, 21 April, the @UN launching of the [#secondworldoceanassessment](#). The event will be be stream on [un.org/regularprocess...](#), at 10 a.m., EDT. @antonioguterres @

 **ICRI Secretariat** @ICRI\_Coral\_Reef · 2h ...  
The [#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#) is launching on 21 April 2021! Spread the word on the only global integrated assessment of our ocean along all three pillars of sustainable development.  
Learn more: [un.org/regularprocess](#)  
[#RegularProcess](#) [#SDG14](#) [#OceanDecade](#) [#SaveOurOcean](#)

[#SecondWorldOceanAssessment](#)

# 15th meeting of the AHWGW

The fifteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process took place, by correspondence due to constraints on the conduct of in-person meetings at United Nations Headquarters, from 14 July to 28 September 2021.

The meeting considered the launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment (WOA II) and various documents related to the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process. This included the mechanism for the establishment of the Pool of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process, the Terms of Reference and Working Methods of the Group of Experts of the third cycle of the Regular Process, and the Terms of Reference for National Focal Points and Focal Points for Intergovernmental Entities.



On 28 September, the fifteenth meeting adopted, under a silence procedure, recommendations to the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly for consideration for submission under the agenda item entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”, on the launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment and progress in the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process.

The Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole recommends the General Assembly to, inter alia, invite States and intergovernmental entities that have not yet done so to designate national focal points and intergovernmental focal points, respectively, to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process and beyond. Relevant United Nations system organizations, bodies, funds and programmes are invited to assist in the implementation

of the third cycle, while relevant intergovernmental organizations are invited to contribute, as appropriate, to the third cycle’s activities.



Credit: Toby Matthews / Ocean Image Bank

## IPBES - 8

The eighth session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-8) took place from 14 to 24 June 2021, where the Group of Experts of the Regular Process delivered a statement on the recent activities of the Regular Process, including the launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment (WOA II).

In its statement at the Plenary, the Group of Experts of the Regular Process highlighted that the findings of WOA II support those of the first World Ocean Assessment that climate change and human use are impacting almost all the components of the ocean. It further noted that the findings of the World Ocean Assessments are consistent with the findings of IPBES’s Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services [1] that alterations of biodiversity often erode economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide and that biodiversity changes have both direct and indirect impacts on human well-being.

Credit: Tracey Jennings / Ocean Image Bank



The statement of the Group of Experts also underscored the potential synergies between the work of IPBES and the Regular Process, including areas in which cooperation between these two processes can be strengthened and maintained on a regular basis. During its third cycle, the Regular Process aims to strengthen its support for and interaction with other ocean-related intergovernmental processes, including by developing a series of brief documents outlining specific policy-relevant information from WOA II as they may relate to and support other ocean-related intergovernmental processes and by participating in meetings, proceedings and other activities of these processes.

The Group of Experts concluded its statement, by noting that its participation in IPBES-8 as an Observer, provides a first effort towards building a sustained and mutually beneficial collaboration and partnership between IPBES and the Regular Process.

IPBES is an intergovernmental body that assesses the state of biodiversity and of the ecosystem services it provides to society, in response to requests from decision-makers. At IPBES-8, the Plenary adopted a decision on the implementation of the rolling work programme of IPBES up to 2030, which, among other things, approved the undertaking of thematic assessments on the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health and the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.



Credit: Tracey Jennings / Ocean Image Bank

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[1] IPBES (2019), Global Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Brondízio, E. S., Settele, J., Díaz, S., Ngo, H. T. (eds). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany.

Email us at [DOALOS@un.org](mailto:DOALOS@un.org)  
Visit us at <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/>

Credit: Philp Hamilton / Ocean Image Bank