



# General Assembly

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Item 76 of the provisional agenda\*

Oceans and the law of the sea

### **Report on the work of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea at its twenty-fifth meeting**

#### **Letter dated 14 July 2025 from the Co-Chairs of the Informal Consultative Process addressed to the President of the General Assembly**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [79/144](#), we were appointed as Co-Chairs of the twenty-fifth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea.

We have the honour to submit to you the attached report on the work of the Informal Consultative Process at its twenty-fifth meeting, which was held from 16 to 19 June 2025. The outcome of the meeting consists of our summary of issues and ideas raised during the meeting, in particular with regard to the topic of focus “Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology: new developments, approaches and challenges”.

In line with past practice, we kindly request that the present letter and the report be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 76 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) François **Jackman**  
Anna **Jóhannsdóttir**  
Co-Chairs

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\* [A/80/150](#).



## **Twenty-fifth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea**

(16–19 June 2025)

### **Co-Chairs' summary**

1. The United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea held its twenty-fifth meeting from 16 to 19 June 2025. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [79/144](#), the meeting focused its discussions on the theme “Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology: new developments, approaches and challenges”.
2. The following supporting documentation was made available to the meeting: (a) report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea on the topic of focus of the twenty-fifth meeting of the Informal Consultative Process ([A/80/70](#)); and (b) format and annotated provisional agenda of the meeting ([A/AC.259/L.25](#)).

### **Agenda items 1 and 2**

#### **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

3. The Co-Chairs, the Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations, François Jackman, and the Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations, Anna Jóhannsdóttir, who were appointed by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, Philemon Yang, opened the meeting.
4. Opening remarks were delivered by the Director of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Vladimír Jareš, on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, Elinor Hammar skjöld; the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Rabab Fatima; and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Li Junhua.
5. Delegations adopted the format and annotated provisional agenda and approved the organization of work.

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **General exchange of views**

6. A general exchange of views took place at the plenary meeting held on 16 June. Some delegations, including one group of States, highlighted the importance of the Informal Consultative Process as an open and inclusive forum for discussing topics and issues related to oceans and the law of the sea in an effective and constructive manner. Several delegations, including some groups of States, expressed their gratitude to the Co-Chairs and to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs for organizing the twenty-fifth meeting of the Informal Consultative Process. Appreciation was also expressed to the Secretary-General for his report on oceans and the law of the sea on the topic of focus of the meeting ([A/80/70](#)).
7. Many delegations, including one group of States, welcomed the decision to focus the discussions of the meeting on the theme “Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology: new developments, approaches and challenges”, noting that capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology were essential for the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

and related agreements, and to ensuring that all States could benefit from the sustainable development of the ocean and its resources, while also safeguarding the long-term vitality of the ocean and ensuring that no one was left behind.

8. Several delegations noted that the theme of the meeting was especially timely, as the international community was confronting escalating ocean challenges, including impacts of climate change such as sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, marine pollution, biodiversity loss and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

9. Many delegations, including one group of States, emphasized the importance of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology for sustainable development and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. One delegation noted with concern that Goal 14 remained one of the least funded Goals, despite the critical role of the ocean in climate regulation, biodiversity, food security and livelihoods. In that context, some delegations, including some groups of States, recalled the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and the calls made on that occasion. One delegation described the Conference as critical to supporting the implementation of Goal 14, and another delegation underscored the need to move towards fulfilling the promises made.

10. Some delegations, including one group of States, reaffirmed that the Convention was the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, as the constitution for the oceans. Some delegations, including a group of States, noted the central relevance of part XIV of the Convention on the development and transfer of marine technology. Another group of States highlighted provisions of the Convention concerning technical assistance in relation to marine scientific research and the protection and preservation of the marine environment. Some delegations noted that relevant capacity-building provisions were also found in the three implementing agreements of the Convention. Some delegations, including one group of States, also welcomed opportunities for targeted capacity-building under the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies of the World Trade Organization. A group of States expressed support for the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and the conclusion of the work of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

11. Many delegations, including a group of States, reiterated their strong support of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and called for its swift entry into force. While noting that capacity-building would be essential for the effective implementation of the Agreement, several delegations, including two groups of States, also recognized the Agreement as a historic opportunity to enhance capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, including through partnerships with relevant stakeholders and cooperation and coordination with relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies, as well as the operationalization of the Capacity-Building and Transfer of Marine Technology Committee and the Clearing-House Mechanism under the Agreement, and the institutionalization of participatory needs assessments.

12. Many delegations, including some groups of States, highlighted the importance of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology in bridging institutional and technological gaps in key areas. Areas identified by delegations included: the use of scientific knowledge for effective decision-making; fisheries management and

governance; prevention and control of marine pollution; climate change resilience, including with respect to coastal infrastructure; advancements in ocean observing and monitoring, data and analytics; fostering economic growth and scientific advancement; strengthening the protection of the marine environment; and renewable energy and new types of fuel and technology in shipping.

13. Some delegations, including some groups of States, underlined that in order for capacity-building and marine technology transfer activities to be effective, it was essential that they respond to the specific needs of States, in particular small island developing States, the least developed countries and landlocked developing States; be tailored to their circumstances; and be sensitive to diversity and regional needs. In order to produce transformative outcomes, it was underscored that capacity-building initiatives must be sustainable and long-term processes rather than isolated actions. Some delegations, including some groups of States, highlighted the fundamental importance of adequate financial support and international partnerships in this context. In this context, one group of States called for further support to replenish the voluntary trust fund for the purpose of assisting developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing States, in attending the meetings of the Informal Consultative Process, and some delegations announced contributions to that trust fund.

14. Several delegations, including one group of States, highlighted the need for strong regional and international cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation. Some delegations, including one group of States, acknowledged the capacity-building efforts undertaken by United Nations system organizations, including through the United Nations-Nippon Foundation of Japan Fellowship Programme, and by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Maritime Organization and the International Seabed Authority. Some delegations noted that capacity-building must be inclusive and that access to scientific knowledge and technology must be fair and equitable. The need to ensure the participation of women and young persons was also noted in that context. A group of States noted the need for a stronger nexus between science and policy that integrated traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. One delegation underscored the need for the transfer of marine technology to be guided by equity, transparency and solidarity.

15. Several delegations, including one group of States, highlighted capacity-building programmes and initiatives that were being implemented at the national, regional and global levels with a focus on developing countries, including with respect to: the development and promotion of ocean governance and a sustainable blue economy; the conservation and restoration of marine resources and coastal ecosystems; climate change resilience; sustainable aquaculture; marine traffic; the monitoring and management of sustainable fisheries, including regional coordination; the development of scientific knowledge to enable informed decision-making regarding food security and environmental protection; and efforts to increase collaboration and partnerships.

16. The Director of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea provided an update on the status of the voluntary trust fund, noting that the General Assembly, in its resolution [79/144](#), had expressed its continued serious concern regarding the lack of resources available in the trust fund. The Director of the Division noted that additional contributions would be needed in order to provide meaningful support to panellists and representatives of developing States for future meetings of the Informal Consultative Process.

**Topic of focus****Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology: new developments, approaches and challenges**

17. In accordance with the format and annotated provisional agenda, the discussion panel on the topic of focus was organized in two segments structured around the following: (a) the role of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology in underpinning sustainable development: new developments, approaches and challenges; and (b) enabling and enhancing capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology through international cooperation and coordination: challenges and opportunities. The panellists gave presentations,<sup>1</sup> after which discussions with delegations and observers, including other panellists, were held.

**1. The role of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology in underpinning sustainable development: new developments, approaches and challenges**

18. In the first part of the segment, the presentations and ensuing discussions were focused on: the implementation of the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction, particularly regarding the transfer of marine technology and capacity-building; challenges for scientific publications from the global South in gaining more citations; deep-sea research; intellectual property and commercialization challenges in scaling up marine innovations; the potential for replicating university-based innovation incubators in capacity-development programmes for developing countries; funding opportunities for the implementation of the Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly for small island developing States; economic and financial challenges in financing the Goals and in addressing market failures affecting States, regional organizations and academic institutions; and the role of the Capacity-building and Transfer of Marine Technology Committee to be established under the Agreement.

19. One delegation asked about strategies to enhance the transfer of marine technology, in particular through the Agreement. The Executive Director of the Global Ocean Forum, Miriam Balgos, emphasized the importance of adopting a multilevel and multisectoral cooperation model. She explained that effective strategies should involve collaboration among the private sector, civil society and, where possible, Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Ms. Balgos also highlighted the value of open data and the sharing of samples, noting that improved access to scientific data could significantly support research, innovation and capacity-building. She further pointed to the proposal set out in the Agreement for a Clearing-House Mechanism as a promising tool to facilitate the exchange of information on available technologies and training opportunities. The Director of Research and Innovation at the National Institute for Ocean Research in Brazil, Andrei Polejack, emphasized the scientific community's optimism regarding the Agreement, particularly its potential to address gaps in relation to the transfer of marine technology. He highlighted the anticipated role of the Scientific and Technical Body, noting that it should be balanced in terms of gender, regional representation and expertise. He also expressed the view that the Clearing-House Mechanism should evolve beyond data access and support more technology transfer.

20. Some delegations underscored the challenges faced by scientific publications from the global South in gaining more citations. Mr. Polejack identified the lack of capacity and technology, language barriers and the high cost of open access

<sup>1</sup> Information concerning the panellists and their affiliations, and links to each of the presentations, can be found in the panel programme, available at [www.un.org/depts/los/consultative\\_process/icp25/ICP25PanelProgramme.pdf](http://www.un.org/depts/los/consultative_process/icp25/ICP25PanelProgramme.pdf).

publishing as the main obstacles. He also emphasized the importance of preventing “parachute science”, in which external researchers extract data without proper collaboration or credit to local scientists, thereby contributing to knowledge imbalances at the global level. In response to a suggestion from a delegation on using artificial intelligence to amplify research from the global South, the chief executive officer and founder of Rum and Sargassum Inc., Legena Henry, noted that artificial intelligence could be a powerful tool for increasing the visibility of publications from the global South.

21. Addressing concerns about deep-sea research, Mr. Polejack noted the lack of exploration in such regions as the South Atlantic and underscored the growing role of initiatives led by philanthropic and non-governmental organizations in filling that gap.

22. Addressing a question from some delegations about barriers to scaling marine innovations, Ms. Henry highlighted the lack of a supportive funding ecosystem in the Caribbean region, contrasting that situation with the ease of accessing capital in more developed innovation environments. She acknowledged the role of her alumni network in supporting her company’s early-stage development, but emphasized the need for more structured funding pathways in the global South. She pointed to the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programmes in the United States of America as models for innovation funding, and suggested that similar systems could greatly benefit innovators in developing countries. In response to a question regarding how biogas was used to power an electric vehicle, Ms. Henry explained that the biogas was used to run a generator, which in turn charged the electric car.

23. A question was posed regarding access to, and engagement with, the mechanisms, in particular philanthropic funding, to finance implementation of the Agreement in small island developing States, and how those resources could be leveraged and scaled up. An Associate Professor and Vice-President of the Diplomatic Academy of Viet Nam, Vice-President of the Asian Society of International Law and arbitrator nominated under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Nguyen Lan Anh, noted that it could take time for the monetary benefits from the utilization of marine genetic resources for benefit-sharing under the Agreement to accrue, but that a number of options were available to mobilize resources for capacity-building in the interim. She emphasized the importance of monitoring and accountability evaluations to ensure the effective allocation of resources, including to different regions with good practices. She noted that various approaches to funding and the transfer of technology could be piloted at the smallest scale initially, and then scaled up on the basis of their evaluation.

24. In response to a question regarding whether the Capacity-Building and Transfer of Marine Technology Committee to be established pursuant to the Agreement could begin work before the entry into force of the Agreement and be given additional responsibilities for coordinating activities related to capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, Ms. Nguyen expressed the view that work should begin in the Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and the Convening of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement, so that the structure of the Committee could be agreed upon and some initial preparatory work could be undertaken before the first Conference of the Parties.

25. Responding to a question regarding the tools available to address the impact of the broader financial crisis on the implementation of the Sustainable Development

Goals, in particular Goal 14, Ms. Nyugen underscored the importance of maintaining momentum, noted the adoption of the Agreement as an important achievement, and pointed to the encouraging voluntary commitments announced in the context of the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference. Mr. Polejack noted the evolution of approaches to funding, as also reflected in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, under which more funding was available for steps to be taken at the international level than at the national level. He also noted the opportunities provided by the uptick in philanthropic and civil society initiatives focused on market-based interventions, such as blue bonds, blue finance and blue carbon, which could also be relevant to biodiversity protection. He further noted the need for more research to understand the impact of mangroves and seaweed on the dynamics of the carbon flow, as well as the effects of climate change on deep-sea biodiversity, particularly mesopelagic species. He further underscored that the oceans were approaching important tipping points, which could result in severe impacts that would push policymakers to respond.

26. In the second part of the segment, the presentations and ensuing discussions were focused on: the added value of implementing data standards as a key component to enable the use of interoperable marine data services; the sharing of best practices and recommendations to strengthen equity, inclusion and decolonization of capacity-development efforts; the legal and operational issues related to vessel monitoring systems and satellite technologies to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in view of unresolved maritime boundaries; factors limiting the use of satellite technologies; undertaking capacity-building through a needs-based approach; opportunities to overcome challenges faced by small island developing States in the Caribbean region; and the value of long-term partnerships in ensuring access to the equitable sharing, in a sustainable manner, of the benefits provided by the ocean.

27. In response to a question regarding proven methodologies for implementing capacity development for services to support the usage of data compliant with S-100 data standards, the Secretary-General of the International Hydrographic Organization, Mathias Jonas, noted that his Organization had identified best practices from across its regional hydrographic commissions and conducted surveys to determine each region's capacity-building needs, which were then matched with available service providers.

28. One delegation and the speakers on the podium underscored the lack of data format standards and the importance of promoting their application. In that context, a question was posed about the practical requirements, costs and training opportunities related to gaining access to marine data services such as the digital twin of navigable waters. Mr. Jonas noted that industry representatives who were members of the working groups of the International Hydrographic Organization handled software development, while the Organization itself focused on proposing internationally aligned standards and addressing training needs for end users.

29. One delegation asked about measures to strengthen equity, inclusion and decolonization under the implementation plan for the Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030) of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. The Deputy Global Coordinator for Capacity Development at the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, Johanna Diwa-Acallar, referred to the lessons learned from the 2023 revision of the capacity-development strategic framework. In that regard, she emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of priority groups, such as those from the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as early-career ocean professionals, Indigenous communities and women, particularly in training and internship opportunities, and provided two examples to illustrate that point.

30. A delegation posed a question about the challenges in using vessel monitoring systems and satellite technologies to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in view of unresolved maritime boundaries. In response, the Head of Applied Research and Capacity Development of Global Fishing Watch, Adel Heenan, explained that Global Fishing Watch used publicly available data sets and allowed users to upload country-specific data if needed. A senior adviser for policy and initiatives at Global Fishing Watch, Michele Kuruc, added that Global Fishing Watch partnered with specialized non-profit organizations to support such activities as maritime patrol planning, and did not engage in boundary negotiations. Ms. Kuruc also highlighted that those unresolved boundaries created legal uncertainty with regard to which laws applied and whether legal action could be taken against vessels.

31. When asked about the restrictions on using open-source data or platforms, Ms. Kuruc explained that, for prosecution purposes, investigators needed verifiable and validated evidence. Open-source data, such as content from social media, often did not meet legal standards for admissibility and therefore could not always be used in legal proceedings.

32. A delegation highlighted challenges in using satellite technologies, such as limited understanding of artificial intelligence and satellite data, restricted permission to use open-source data, and the lack of resources and standardization in data formats. Ms. Heenan explained that Global Fishing Watch collaborated with academic and research institutes that already worked with national Governments. Those partnerships included training in computational skills and data handling to support the co-development of research and promote the acceptance of open-source data. She mentioned the availability of small research grants to encourage active collaboration. Addressing concerns regarding data standardization, Ms. Kuruc highlighted the efforts made by the European Union to implement the Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange, a standard for the exchange of messages related to fisheries, including information regarding the identification, position, licence, inspection and catch information of vessels, with a view to the sustainable management of global fish stocks.

33. In response to a question about capacity-building through a needs-based assessment, Ms. Heenan explained that the process involved the direct participation of member States and the use of in-country staff, questionnaires and focus groups to encourage collaboration among national agencies responsible for monitoring, control and surveillance. She noted that new assessments required initial desktop research and depended on the availability of national government departments. She also noted that the current framework for monitoring, control and surveillance had been developed with the International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network for Fisheries-related Activities, and that an additional framework focused on biodiversity and marine protected areas would be released later in 2025.

34. In response to a question about satellite coverage in the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem, Ms. Heenan explained that Global Fishing Watch used two data types, namely, automated identification system-based vessel tracking and open-source satellite imagery that included the Gulf of Guinea. Regarding the use of automated identification systems to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the area, Ms. Kuruc noted that, although support for the use of vessel monitoring systems for large-scale vessels had been expressed at a ministerial meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations held in 2005, there was no international mandate for such use, and it was left to individual countries. She also noted the existence of regional initiatives to explore the use of automated identification systems for fisheries control and the enhancement of safety and navigation.



35. One delegation asked about positive examples of capacity-building among Caribbean small island developing States that faced multifaceted challenges. The Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer of the Fisheries Division, Antigua and Barbuda, Tricia Lovell, underlined the importance of shifting away from a unilateral approach to implementing a capacity-building programme, in which the provider and the recipient were not on an equal footing when conducting needs assessments and programme development. She stressed the value of knowledge held by local communities within small island developing States in co-designing and co-creating effective capacity-building programmes. Such knowledge provided a foundation for building mutually beneficial partnerships that made it possible to reach meaningful outcomes. As a notable case of a good practice in that regard, she highlighted the example of Kiribati, which had been presented by another panellist, an Associate Professor of Biology at Tufts University and Chief Scientist at the Blue Nature Alliance, Randi Rotjan.

36. A delegation thanked Ms. Rotjan for highlighting successful examples of equitable partnerships that provided tangible benefits to local communities. It emphasized the vital importance of marine genetic resources and the need for small island developing States to have fair access to the benefits deriving from those resources. In response, Ms. Rotjan reaffirmed the value of long-term partnerships that supported co-created capacity-building programmes while respecting the cultural norms of communities in small island developing States.

37. In the third part of the segment, the presentations and ensuing discussions focused on how leveraging digital tools could facilitate the transfer of marine technology; international efforts in ocean capacity-building and technology transfer for developing States; the blue economy and capacity and technology transfer; lessons on co-designed collaborations, gender and measurement of success as catalysers towards effective capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology under the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction; advancing ocean governance through capacity-building and marine technology transfer; and bridging science, marine technology and sustainable development.

38. In response to a question as to whether sufficient metrics existed to measure the level and trends of capacity-building and transfer of marine technology, the panellists generally agreed that such metrics were currently insufficient. A judge on the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Frida María Armas Pfirter, responded that, while the situation was difficult to quantify precisely, any additional action to promote capacity-building and transfer of marine technology was a step forward. In that respect, she highlighted the significance of the Agreement and its relatively structured framework for capacity-building and transfer of marine technology, particularly when compared to the original approach taken under the Convention. She suggested that one metric could be the successful implementation of the Agreement, including the establishment and functioning of its structures and institutions.

39. The Director of Operations at Naval Headquarters in Nigeria, Sunday Daniel Atakpa, noted that the African region did not have sufficient metrics to assess capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, and that the lack of data for a range of maritime activities made it difficult to gauge progress. The Coordinator of the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, Nayeon Kim, noted that the data related to the Ocean Decade reflected some, but not all, of the existing capacity-building and transfer of marine technology activities. Such data could nonetheless be useful, as they could demonstrate specific trends and areas of focus. She added that while data related to the Ocean Decade could be a proxy for broader trends in capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, they did not comprehensively capture all activities that were under way.

40. One delegation expressed appreciation for the thoughtful contributions made by the panellists and noted the highly-qualified and gender-balanced nature of the panel.

41. One delegation raised a question regarding how best to capture the lived experiences of local communities, particularly in relation to the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, and how doing so could strengthen the link between the implementation of the Agreement and sustainable development. The same delegation also noted that many developing States were already engaged in such work. It emphasized the need for such efforts to be better integrated into national policy, particularly in the context of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, and the need to strengthen the positioning of developing States within the framework of the Agreement.

42. Building on that point, Ms. Armas Pfrter reflected on the importance of integrating Indigenous Peoples and local communities into the processes under the Agreement, while using their traditional knowledge. She noted that the concept of inclusion had evolved significantly and had been shaped by ongoing contributions from those groups. In that context, an official of the Ministry of Fisheries of Morocco and expert with the European Fisheries Control Agency, Widad Nafaty, cautioned that capacity-building should not be limited merely to the delivery of equipment or short-term training; instead, approaches should be adopted that promoted long-term sustainability and ownership on the part of local communities. She highlighted the role of the Agreement in providing more specific mechanisms for capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology in areas beyond national jurisdiction, for instance through the introduction of new responsibilities and coordination arrangements that supported equitable benefit-sharing aligned with national priorities.

43. One delegation highlighted the need for effective capacity-building mechanisms developed by international organizations, drew attention to the ongoing work of the Preparatory Commission under the Agreement, and noted that the Capacity-Building and Transfer of Marine Technology Committee might operate from a different perspective. A Research Fellow with the Nippon Foundation-University of Edinburgh Ocean Voices Programme, Maila Guilhon, responded that, while there were no easy answers, consideration should be given to the metrics for measuring the effectiveness of processes related to capacity-building. She underscored the importance of aligning capacity-building mechanisms with existing experiences and best practices, and noted that, although such practices were still evolving, they needed to be reflected in and incorporated into ongoing efforts. Preparations for the entry into force of the Agreement presented an opportunity to take stock, examine other processes, and draw lessons for the future.

44. In response to a question regarding a prototype for shark tracking and how the transfer of technology could be scaled, the President Director of the PROSHARK Institute, Brazil, Fernanda de Oliveira Lana, referring to the case of Brazil, highlighted that few private companies and United Nations agencies were supporting efforts to build production capacity at the national level, particularly in developing States, where such initiatives were just beginning. In that regard, she pointed out that the successful transfer of marine technology required more than hardware; it involved fostering partnerships, building networks, addressing cost-effectiveness, engaging with all relevant stakeholders and collecting data to inform national policy and monitoring systems.

## 2. **Enabling and enhancing capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology through international cooperation and coordination: challenges and opportunities**

45. In the first part of the segment, the presentations and ensuing discussions were focused on: the role of the Green Climate Fund in supporting capacity-building; experiences of working with traditional knowledge holders; the identification of potential marine protected areas under the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction; the importance of building on lessons learned, particularly with regard to effectively leveraging partnerships; the integration of legal elements into training on marine spatial planning; the incentives for participation in the Agreement as it relates to capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology; human rights approaches in ocean governance capacity-building initiatives; and challenges and opportunities relating to sustained financing for capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.

46. In response to a question from one delegation regarding the role of the Green Climate Fund in supporting the capacity-development facilities of the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, a Legal and Governing Bodies Officer at the secretariat, Everett Sioa, explained that, as an accredited entity of the Green Climate Fund for the Pacific region, the secretariat received funding to implement climate activities throughout the region, which enabled the secretariat, for example, to support members in developing national adaptation plans and preparing nationally determined contributions in line with the Paris Agreement.

47. Another delegation asked how working with traditional knowledge holders and across different cultures could help to advance international coordination and cooperation. Mr. Sioa provided an example in which the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, in collaboration with the Australian Institute of Marine Sciences and the Government of Samoa, had developed a community database to support coral reef monitoring that incorporated traditional knowledge obtained through engagement with local communities. He further explained that the secretariat worked with traditional knowledge holders to transcribe existing traditional knowledge, while ensuring that the intellectual property rights remained with its keepers.

48. Responding to a delegation that had asked which global data sets would be particularly useful for the initial identification of a potential marine protected area under the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction, a Project Scientist at Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory, University of California Santa Barbara, Kristen Johannes, elaborated on the services provided by the Laboratory to support States in developing proposals for marine protected areas. Once States or groups of States had identified an approximate geographic area of interest, her institution could assist in precisely defining of the area, including by utilizing regional expertise and data sets available in the region. In addition, her institution intended to contribute to open access resources by sharing ocean data with existing databases and open access repositories.

49. Some delegations asked the panellists to share their lessons learned for future capacity-building and transfer of marine technology, in particular on how to leverage partnerships to enhance capacity-building and ensure that the transfer of marine technology was conducted in a sustainable and equitable manner. Mr. Sioa emphasized that capacity-building was a team effort and could best be achieved through collaboration. He explained that the policies and strategies of the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme in relation to partnership engagement helped to identify partners with shared values. Ms. Johannes pointed out that, in order to ensure that stated needs would be met and that no resources were

wasted, strong relationships with a strong communicative standard should be at the centre of all capacity-building and marine technology transfer activities. She also highlighted that her institution aimed to facilitate access to relevant data for partners while working towards the long-term goal of making all ocean data publicly available. A Research Coordinator at the Institute for Systems and Computer Engineering, Technology and Science and Professor of Electrical Engineering at the Instituto Superior de Engenharia do Porto in Portugal, Eduardo Alexandre Pereira da Silva, stressed the importance of a variety of factors as lessons learned, such as good management of science, the availability of funding and the involvement of all stakeholders, including those from non-ocean-related industries, in help to develop more sustainable technologies.

50. One delegation requested further elaboration of the legal elements included in the training sessions on marine spatial planning organized by the International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network. In response, a Project Manager at the Network, who is also affiliated with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, Claudette Spiteri, emphasized that where relevant legal frameworks existed, they were integrated into the training sessions organized by the Network. She highlighted that where the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission had relevant in-house expertise, that expertise was always drawn upon and supplemented by experts in the appropriate national and regional legal frameworks. For example, in the case of any training and activities related to marine spatial planning in the Mediterranean, the regional seas programme under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the would be a key partner.

51. In response to a question from one delegation on incentives to participate actively in capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology under the Agreement, the Representative for the Ocean at the International Council of Environmental Law, Hiroko Muraki Gottlieb, emphasized the opportunities available for early ratifiers of the Agreement, including those related to needs assessments and funding. She also noted the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence, which had potential for matching needs and offers and providing a less onerous process for donors and recipients. She further noted that the benefits of early ratification of the Agreement would include participation in decision-making from the outset.

52. One delegation requested further information on the integration of human rights approaches in the training sessions offered by the International Ocean Institute – Southern Africa. A member of the Management Committee of the Institute and member of Rhodes University Business School, Letitia Greyling, explained that any initiative that addressed environmental resources and natural capital had an impact on society and people. She noted the need to understand ecosystems not only in terms of services, but also from cultural, economic, religious and moral perspectives linked to an understanding of individual rights in respect of such ecosystems, including the rights to a healthy environment, clean water and clean air. The Institute took a nested sustainability approach integrating all elements related to the natural environment, including goods and services, economic development, livelihoods and quality of life. The training sessions organized by the Institute were tailored to their respective audiences, which had included small-scale fishers, representatives of the public sector, government officials and civil society.

53. One delegation highlighted that the challenge of securing sustainable finance, as highlighted by panellists including Ms. Spiteri, was of particular interest. It noted the institutional links between the Network and the Global Environment Facility, and pointed out that institutional links could be key to ensuring sustainable finance for future capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, including under the Agreement.

54. In the second part of the segment, the presentations and ensuing discussions were focused on: practical challenges in the implementation of the Convention with respect to the development and transfer of marine technology; domestic considerations with respect to the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement related to capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology; systemic drawbacks owing to inadequate contextualization, poor coordination and the insufficient integration of local knowledge; the role of international cooperation for the sustainability of wild fisheries; collaborative infrastructures to promote ocean research and equity in technology transfer; and the enhancement of marine safety and security through the transfer of satellite navigation technologies.

55. One delegation asked whether the free services provided by the European Union Global Navigation Satellite System (Galileo) and European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service satellite navigation systems were aligned with the Secretary-General's call for universal access to early warning systems by 2027 (the Early Warnings for All initiative). In response, a Counsellor and Legal Adviser at the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Thomas Ramopoulos, noted that the Emergency Warning Satellite Service, developed under the Galileo programme to support early warning for natural disasters, was nearly ready and would be available for States members of the European Union in 2026. In parallel, the European Commission was engaging with the United Nations to explore extending that service to other countries in support of the Early Warnings for All initiative. Mr. Ramopoulos underscored that the European Union adopted a holistic approach, including a disaster response system that operated around the globe. Also in line with the initiative, the European Union was leveraging data obtained from satellites to enhance early detection capabilities and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, including to safeguard human lives.

56. A participant reflected on the practical challenges in implementing capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, drawing on the experience of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. She highlighted the need for low-cost technology that was sensitive to the realities of beneficiaries, equipment that could be maintained, and training sessions that would be both applied and retained over time. She also underscored the role of metadata in preserving data ownership and called for deeper reflection on how to sustain, maintain and retain capacity once it has been built and the marine technology had been transferred. In response, a judge on the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Kriangsak Kittichaisaree, emphasized the need to better match the supply of, and demand for, marine technology, noting persistent gaps in that regard. He also stressed the need for realistic expectations, citing the constraints posed by intellectual property rights during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic as a cautionary example for technology transfer.

57. One delegation suggested increased scrutiny on the part of the Co-Chairs and the Secretariat in relation to the selection of panellists to ensure the non-politicization of the Informal Consultative Process.

58. In response to a question on the current status of an underwater habitat project, the founder of the Proteus Ocean Group, Fabien Cousteau, acknowledged the complexity of building an international underwater station and noted that the project was supported by an investment vehicle that made it possible to operate a public-facing platform for research and communications. The first habitat was planned for deployment in approximately 18 months; the engineering work and environmental impact assessments had already been completed. Unlike the International Space Station, an underwater station must remain stationary, something that made it more suitable for sustained and regionally focused research. The facility would include

coupling systems for autonomous underwater vehicles and a network of sensors, which would support research around the station at different depths. Mr. Cousteau emphasized that the vision from the outset had been one of global collaboration, with the aim of eventually deploying at least seven strategically placed stations around the world to monitor ocean health, biodiversity and microplastics, and to connect with broader ocean observation networks.

#### **Agenda item 4**

##### **Inter-agency cooperation and coordination**

59. The Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, in her capacity as Focal Point of UN-Oceans, reported on activities since the twenty-fourth meeting of the Informal Consultative Process. She emphasized the role of UN-Oceans in enhancing coordination on ocean and coastal issues across the United Nations system and the International Seabed Authority. She noted that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights had been admitted as the thirty-first member.

60. The Legal Counsel highlighted the participation of UN-Oceans in the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference, which had focused on mobilizing multilateral action for the realization of Goal 14. In that regard, she also underscored the side event organized by UN-Oceans entitled “UN-Oceans as a mechanism to mobilize multilateral ocean action and amplify collective impacts towards the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”, which had highlighted how members of UN-Oceans were building synergies and collaborating to act as one in supporting States’ efforts to achieve Goal 14. She also referred to side events at the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, where UN-Oceans members had presented joint contributions to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and ocean-climate action. She also noted that members of UN-Oceans had continued to support such processes as the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Members had emphasized their commitment to strengthening the coordination and coherence of United Nations system activities in the context of the promotion of a better understanding of the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and preparations for its entry into force.

61. Looking ahead, the Legal Counsel presented the work programme of UN-Oceans for 2025, which prioritized support for the next United Nations Ocean Conference and continued inter-agency collaboration. She stressed the need to leverage synergies and avoid duplication.

62. With regard to the topic of focus, the Legal Counsel underlined the importance of capacity-building and marine technology transfer for sustainable ocean development, especially through partnerships in support of developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States. She reaffirmed that, despite funding constraints, UN-Oceans was committed to targeted, needs-based capacity-building.

63. In response to questions from some delegations and a group of States, the Legal Counsel underscored the commitment made by UN-Oceans and its members, including the Office of Legal Affairs, to providing support for processes related to the Agreement and looking ahead to its implementation. While activities within the Office of Legal Affairs in support of UN-Oceans were not separately funded and were conducted within existing resources, members of UN-Oceans were committed to

making a difference. The Legal Counsel further noted the close cooperation of UN-Oceans and its members on processes in the fields of climate and biodiversity, which was expected to continue in the future.

**Agenda item 5**

**Process for the selection of topics and panellists so as to facilitate the work of the General Assembly**

64. Referring to paragraph 341 of General Assembly resolution [79/144](#), the Co-Chairs invited views and proposals on ways to devise a transparent, objective and inclusive process for the selection of topics and panellists so as to facilitate the work of the Assembly during informal consultations concerning the annual resolution on oceans and the law of the sea.

65. No statements were made under the item.

**Agenda item 6**

**Issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the General Assembly on oceans and the law of the sea**

66. The Co-Chairs drew attention to a composite streamlined list of issues that could benefit from the attention of the General Assembly and invited comments from representatives.

67. The Co-Chairs also invited representatives to submit additional topics that could benefit from the attention of the General Assembly.

68. A delegation suggested that, at a future meeting, the Informal Consultative Process could consider the subject of improved and innovative ocean finance mechanisms under the theme of “Closing the gap: financing Sustainable Development Goal 14 for sustainable and healthy oceans”.

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