



**Fourteenth meeting of UN-Oceans
20 March 2015, IMO Headquarters, London**

Summary report

1. A meeting of UN-Oceans took place at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization, in London, on 20 March 2015, from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm. In accordance with the revised terms of reference of UN-Oceans, the meeting was convened and organized by the UN-Oceans Focal Point, the United Nations Legal Counsel/Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

2. The following representatives of UN-Oceans members participated in the meeting: Mr. Marco Boccia (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO); Mr. David Osborn (International Atomic Energy Agency – IAEA); Mr. Brandt Wagner (International Labour Organization – ILO); Mr. Stefan Micallef, Mr. Edward Kleverlaan and Mr. Fredrik Haag, (International Maritime Organization – IMO); Mr. Vladimir Ryabinin and Mr. Julian Barbière (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – IOC/UNESCO); Mr. Sainivalati Navoti (International Seabed Authority – ISA); Mr. Andrew Hudson (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP); Ms. Julie Ritz (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – DESA); Mr. Takehiro Nakamura and Mr. Ole Vestergaard (United Nations Environment Programme – UNEP); Mr. Cameron Shilton (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – UNHCR); Mr. Christian Susan (United Nations Industrial Development Organization - UNIDO); Mr. Tumi Tómasson (United Nations University – UNU) and Mr. Edgar Cabrera (World Meteorological Organization – WMO). The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS/OLA) was represented by Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli. The following representatives participated in the meeting by telephone, either in full or in part: Mr. Fabio Carocci (FAO), Ms. Regina Asariotis (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – UNCTAD), and Ms. Heidi Savelli (UNEP).

Item 1 – Opening of the meeting

3. Ms. Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli, Director, DOALOS/OLA, opened the meeting, welcomed the participants and thanked IMO for having offered to host the meeting of UN-Oceans at its headquarters. Mr. Koji Sekimizu, Secretary-General of IMO, made an opening statement, in which he highlighted the pressures and challenges faced by the oceans, and the importance of inter-agency cooperation and collaboration to strengthen coordination on cross-cutting issues and activities. Ms. Goettsche-Wanli thanked Mr. Sekimizu for his statement.

Item 2 – Election of Chair

4. Mr. Stefan Micallef (IMO) was elected as Chair of the meeting.

Item 3 – Adoption of the agenda

5. DOALOS/OLA recalled that the draft agenda was circulated in advance of the meeting and that the only proposal for amendment related to the re-ordering of two agenda items pertaining to the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP). Thereafter, the following agenda for the meeting was adopted, as amended:

1. Opening
2. Election of Chair
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Inventory of member organizations' activities and mandates
5. Contribution to the discussion on the topic of focus of the 16th meeting of ICP
6. Statement to ICP-16 on UN-Oceans' progress report
7. Activities or events of interest to the UN-Oceans membership
8. UN-Oceans website
9. Scheduling of next meeting
10. Other matters
11. Closing

Item 4 – Inventory of member organizations' activities and mandates

6. DOALOS/OLA recalled that the inventory was part of the biennial UN-Oceans Work Programme (2014-2015) and should be completed in time for the 16th meeting of the Informal Consultative Process (ICP), which would be held from 6 to 10 April 2015. UN-Oceans members had agreed to identify possible areas for collaboration and synergy based on the inventory of mandates, priorities and ongoing and planned activities. Nearly all members had identified their mandates for the inventory, and the next step would be to add the activities. DOALOS/OLA expressed appreciation to FAO for the development and funding of the online platform to reflect the inventory.

7. FAO presented the structure of the electronic platform of the inventory, noting several issues: (a) the inventory does not allow for multiple selection of mandates or thematic areas for the same activity; (b) within the search interface it should be possible to (i) search using one criteria only, (ii) search by organization only, (iii) include only those records for which information is provided, and (iv) indicate which UN agencies are jointly operating in an activity; and (c) the inventory should clarify geographic coverage and take into account the hierarchical structure. UN-Oceans members provided their comments, including in particular that further work was required to make the inventory more user-friendly before data could be entered. Issues of how to keep the database current and its long-term sustainability were raised, as well as the cost implications and lack of resources.

8. It was agreed that UN-Oceans members would revert to FAO with comments on the database within one month (by 17 April). It was also agreed that UN-Oceans would report to ICP that the first step in the development of the inventory had been completed, namely the identification of mandates. Members of UN-Oceans attending the ICP meeting in April could also, if necessary, continue discussing issues relating to the sustainability of the database and what specific information should be entered.

9. In order to facilitate the identification of synergies, several organizations (DOALOS/OLA, FAO, IAEA, ILO, IMO, IOC, ISA, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNU and WMO) gave presentations providing

examples or case studies of ongoing and possible future joint activities.¹ ISA presented its capacity-building initiatives and circulated a report on “Developing a Regulatory Framework for Mineral Exploitation in the Area”, inviting UN-Oceans members to comment on the report by mid-May 2015. WMO highlighted its cooperation with IMO and International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) on maritime safety services, as well as joint capacity-building work with the IHO, IOC and WMO. UNDP presented a case study on GloBallast, a collaboration with the Global Environment Facility, IMO and UNDP. FAO presented its multiple joint activities and foreseen synergies across its Fisheries and Agriculture Department, including its work with various partners on the Common Oceans Programme, funded by GEF, and a capacity-building workshop on linking global and regional levels in the management of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, held in February 2015, in which some of the UN-Oceans members also participated. An overview of current developments of the GEF-funded Coastal Fisheries Initiative was also presented. UNU spoke on its fisheries training programme, funded by the Government of Iceland, and in partnership with FAO, among others. IOC/UNESCO indicated that it was working together with WMO on a technical commission on the ocean climate system, and had opened a joint office in Brest; it also sought cooperation and input to its capacity-building programmes, such as the Ocean Teacher Centers. IOC/UNESCO announced that its work with UNDP on the transboundary water assessment programme (TWAP) would become available online in June 2015. IMO presented a case study of its partnership with various UN-Oceans members on microplastics in the marine environment through the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), as well as through the UNEP-led Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), and also presented potential opportunities for increased cooperation within UN-Oceans. UNIDO presented its capacity development programmes, including in the Gulf of Mexico in cooperation with FAO. IAEA noted its work with GESAMP and IOC on ocean acidification, its contribution to the Regular Process and the funding it had provided for World Oceans Day. UNHCR presented its Protection at Sea initiative, noting that DOALOS/OLA and IMO had participated in the High Commissioner’s Dialogue in 2014. UNEP discussed its continuing work with FAO, IAEA and IMO on the Regional Seas Programme and indicated the need for collaboration with other members of UN-Oceans in order to implement the Protocols to the Regional Seas Conventions. ILO spoke about its work with partners on the working conditions of fishers and seafarers. DOALOS/OLA presented various examples of collaboration with other UN-Oceans members, such as the Secretary-General’s report, the Regular Process, GESAMP, capacity-building activities and World Oceans Day. Reference was made to UN-Water (the United Nations inter-agency mechanism on all freshwater-related issues, including sanitation), which had developed many joint programmes for which it was able to receive funding. It was suggested that a document outlining the different characteristics between UN-Water and UN-Oceans would be useful.

10. Members appreciated the usefulness of UN-Oceans as a forum for information exchange. It was recognized that, through such exchange, UN-Oceans had the advantage of raising awareness of the ongoing activities of its members, which also provided the opportunity for UN-Oceans to “deliver as one”. DESA emphasized that it had in the past benefited from the contribution of numerous UN-Oceans members to several oceans-related reports such as a non-recurrent publication on how oceans- and seas-related measures contribute to the three dimensions of sustainable development and the currently being drafted chapter 3 of the 2015 Global Sustainable Development Report dealing with the oceans, seas, marine resources and human well-being nexus. It was agreed that the issue would be reflected in the UN-Oceans statement to ICP.

¹ The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) sent a presentation on its activities in advance of the meeting, but was not in attendance.

Item 5 – Contribution to the discussion on the topic of focus of the 16th meeting of the ICP

11. DOALOS/OLA thanked all entities that had contributed to the first part of the report of the Secretary-General on the topic of focus of the 16th meeting of the ICP. The contributions would be posted on the DOALOS website along with the report itself. DOALOS/OLA also recalled that the General Assembly, in paragraph 301 of its resolution 69/245 on oceans and the law of the sea, underlined the importance of the constructive and timely inputs of intergovernmental organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations to the report as well as of their participation in relevant meetings and processes.

12. DOALOS/OLA had circulated a copy of the format and annotated provisional agenda of the 16th ICP meeting to UN-Oceans members, informing that the two Co-Chairs had developed a format for the meeting, following consultations with Member States, with two main segments on: (a) the environmental, social and economic dimensions of oceans and progress made in integrating the three dimensions, including an overview of activities and initiatives promoting their integration; and (b) opportunities for, and challenges to, the enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans.

Item 6 – Statement to ICP-16 on UN-Oceans’ progress report

13. DOALOS/OLA recalled that a draft statement had been distributed to all UN-Oceans members on 19 March, the final version of which would be delivered to the 16th ICP meeting by the United Nations Legal Counsel as focal point of UN-Oceans in accordance with the terms of reference. It was agreed that a paragraph would be inserted in the statement stating that UN-Oceans as a coordination mechanism contributes to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. In this regard, examples of activities which particularly provided for the integration of the three dimensions were highlighted by IMO. It was also agreed that UN-Oceans members would have one week (until 27 March) to provide their inputs to the draft statement, which would be recirculated for comments on 31 March.

Item 7 – Activities or events of interest to UN-Oceans membership

(a) SDGs and Post-2015 development agenda process

14. DESA provided information on the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, including the report of the United Nations Statistical Commission. Concern was expressed by IOC/UNESCO, as co-lead member of the Technical Support Team for Goal 14, that only the first two indicators from the list of indicators that had been forwarded by the lead members had been reflected into the list prepared by the Statistical Commission.

(b) Paris Climate Change Conference

15. IMO informed the meeting about the outcome of the Climate Change Conference in Lima, and about upcoming meetings in June, August and October, as well as the ministerial meeting in November.

16. DOALOS/OLA highlighted the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including statements on the link between climate change and oceans. Noting relevant

paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 69/245, DOALOS/OLA recalled that the General Assembly recognized the importance of raising awareness of the adverse impact of climate change on the marine environment and on marine biodiversity, in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations. With a view to bringing to the attention of States the above information and providing an overview of the ongoing activities of UN-Oceans members relating to oceans and climate change, it was agreed that the focal point for UN-Oceans would deliver a statement on behalf of UN-Oceans at the upcoming session of the UNFCCC in Bonn in June 2015, during the meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice, under agenda item 6 “Matters relating to science and review”, sub-item (a) “Research and systematic observation”. It was agreed that members of UN-Oceans would provide their input to the draft statement to be prepared by DOALOS/OLA, which would then be circulated for comments.

17. It was also agreed that it would be a good idea for UN-Oceans to organize a side-event and an exhibit on oceans, climate change and ocean acidification during the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP) meeting in Paris at the end of the year. It was agreed that IMO would propose this at the upcoming meeting of the High-Level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change in April when it discusses the organization of side events as well as an exhibit area at UNFCCC COP21.

(c) Regular Process

18. DOALOS/OLA provided an update as Secretariat of the Regular Process on the finalization of the first global integrated marine assessment. The draft assessment had been completed by the Group of Experts, and peer review, including by States, had closed on 15 March. DOALOS thanked CBD, FAO, IAEA, IMO, UNCTAD and UNESCO for their comments, and noted that the Group of Experts would be meeting from 27 April to 1 May to discuss all comments received, with a view to submitting a revised draft of the assessment by 22 May. After approval and drafting of recommendation by the Bureau of the Regular Process, as well as copy-editing and translation of the summary into the official languages of the United Nations, the summary would be issued for consideration by Members States at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole from 8 to 11 September, and by the General Assembly by the end of the year. DOALOS thanked in particular IOC and UNEP for their unwavering technical and financial support to the Regular Process. IOC/UNESCO noted that it was important to take stock of lessons learned during the first cycle of the Regular Process.

(d) World Oceans Day 2015

19. IOC/UNESCO informed the meeting of its activities planned for World Oceans Day in Paris on 8 June 2015, which would be attended by Prince Albert of Monaco and the Presidents of Palau and the Seychelles. It invited UN-Oceans members to contribute to the workshops at the event. It was agreed that a statement by UN-Oceans would be made at the end of the plenary session, after Round Table 3 entitled “The Ocean as Part of the Solution? - Aspects of Governance”, which was scheduled from 4:15 to 5:00 p.m., just before the high-level segment of the meeting.

20. DOALOS/OLA informed the meeting of the commemoration of World Oceans Day in New York, the theme for which was “Healthy Oceans, Healthy Planet”. The broad theme would allow UN-Oceans members to also adopt sub-themes relevant to their mandates. DOALOS planned to coordinate the second annual photo contest in conjunction with partners in the UN, civil society and the diving community, which would be open to all ages. A reception would be held on 8 June at UN Headquarters from 6 to 8pm, where winners of the photo contest would be announced. The Empire State Building

would be lit in the World Oceans Day colours. IAEA indicated its readiness to again provide financial support to the photo contest.

21. WMO indicated its intention to celebrate World Oceans Day on the last day of the WMO Congress, including through the organization of a side event and exhibit on oceans.

22. UNEP planned to focus its World Oceans Day activities on marine litter under the theme “Healthy Oceans, Healthy Planet”. Its active campaign on marine litter would continue until the end of 2015. A screening of the film “Mission blue” was planned in New York with a roundtable discussion with Silvia Earle. DOALOS informed that the ICP topic next year would be on marine debris, plastics and microplastics.

Others

23. DOALOS informed the meeting about the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, which had held its ninth and final meeting from 20 to 23 January 2015. The outcome was available on the DOALOS website as document A/69/780.

24. FAO informed that the Voluntary Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines) were launched in all official languages; and that the Workshop on the Development of a Global Assistance Programme in Support of the Implementation of the SSF Guidelines held in December 2014 was successfully conducted. It was also noted that a global forum on tenure and fishing rights would be held from 23 to 27 March in Cambodia. FAO also noted that it was conducting a feasibility study on the establishment of a FAO World Fisheries University with assistance from the Government of the Republic of Korea.

25. IMO informed that it would hold a symposium on marine geoengineering on 23 April at IMO, followed by the 68th session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) from 11 to 15 May, and the 42nd session of GESAMP from 31 August to 3 September 2015, to be held at IOC/UNESCO. A conference in Malmö, Sweden, on safe and sustainable shipping in the Arctic was also being organized by IMO from 25 to 27 August 2015.

Item 8 – UN-Oceans website

26. Members agreed to review the website to see if any updates were required and convey this information to FAO.

Item 9 – Scheduling of next meeting

27. It was agreed that DOALOS/OLA would, if required, convene a face-to-face meeting in the margins of the 16th ICP meeting to facilitate a further exchange of views on the inventory.

28. It was also agreed that the next face-to-face meeting of UN-Oceans would be held the following year in New York, when a decision could be taken as to which member of UN-Oceans would host the next face-to-face meeting at its headquarters. WMO proposed that members alternate in hosting future meetings every other year at the headquarters of one of the UN-Oceans members.

Item 10 – Other matters

30. DOALOS/OLA informed that, upon request, it had reported three times to the HLCP (in March and October 2014 and February 2015), providing procedural information on the meetings held by UN-Oceans. It was agreed that DOALOS would inform and copy members on any such future reports, in order to allow members to inform their principals. It was noted that UN-Oceans needed to strengthen its relationship with HLCP in order to bring forward issues, including opportunities to “deliver as one”.

Item 11 – Closing

31. DOALOS/OLA thanked Mr. Micallef for chairing and IMO for its generous hosting of the meeting. The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting at 5:30pm.