

News from Fascinating Programmes and Projects

UNESCO launches first *Ocean Decade Actions* to drive ocean knowledge revolution

8 June 2021 – Paris, France – In the context of global celebrations for [World Oceans Day](#), UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission announced the first Actions officially endorsed as part of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, 2021-2030 (the '[Ocean Decade](#)').

“From restoring the Great Barrier Reef to mapping 100% of the ocean floor in high resolution, these innovative programmes and contributions make up the first set of Ocean Decade Actions that will contribute to help deliver the ocean we want by 2030” said UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay.

Led by diverse partners from science, government, civil society, United Nations agencies, the private sector, philanthropy and international organizations, these flagship *Ocean Decade Actions* are characterized by their wide geographical reach.

Subject to a competitive selection process with hundreds of applications, the endorsed *Actions* were selected for their focus on solutions and ability to accelerate the generation and uptake of ocean knowledge for sustainable development; for their use of innovative technology; for their transdisciplinary efforts to co-design solutions between scientists and users of ocean knowledge; and for their respect of inclusivity, empowering women, early-career professionals and indigenous knowledge holders across their activities.

The thematic diversity of the endorsed *Actions* is reflected in initiatives to expand deep sea research and exploration of the little-known twilight zone of the ocean (from 200 to 1000m); development of knowledge and solutions to reduce multiple pressures on marine ecosystems including from climate change, biodiversity loss, underwater noise or pollution; the use of innovative technology to collect data on the state of the ocean and use that data to make decisions about its management; and measures to improve sustainable management and resilience of fish stocks.

The cultural values of the ocean are a cross cutting theme across many of the Decade Actions with specific initiatives to improve ocean literacy around the world, and a specific workstream to unlock ocean knowledge and benefits for the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS). A range Capacity Development of *Actions* aims to ensure that no one is left behind over the next ten years with initiatives that aim to boost inclusivity in ocean science around genders, generations and geographies.

A full list of the endorsed *Ocean Decade Actions* is publicly available on the official [Ocean Decade website](#).

*“The hundreds of responses to the Ocean Decade's first *Call for Decade Actions* showcase the success of and huge interest around this global movement. This initial *Actions* are just the first building blocks of the Decade – there will be many chances to engage”* explained Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary of UNESCO's [Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission](#).

Periodic *Calls for Actions* will offer partners across the globe plenty of opportunities to develop or support new programmes and become a part of the Ocean Decade's knowledge revolution.

To support the Decade and translate its objective to local and national scales, since January 2021, more than 25 national committees have been established in Europe, North America, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

“Over the next decade, the international community must invest heavily in ocean science to find innovative solutions to major global challenges. This is the basic raison d'être of the UN Ocean Decade, which is captured in the slogan ‘The Science we need for the Ocean we want!’” highlighted Peter Thomson, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean.

A Decade Alliance to boost financial support to ocean science programmes has been established with the participation of Heads of States from Norway, Monaco, Portugal, and Kenya, and will also include leaders from philanthropy and ocean industries.

Contributing to the [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), the Ocean Decade recognizes the need to transform the way we develop and use ocean knowledge to enhance the ocean's role as a vehicle for sustainable and equitable economic growth.

About the Ocean Decade:

Proclaimed in 2017 by the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) ('the Ocean Decade') seeks to stimulate ocean science and knowledge generation to reverse the decline of the state of the ocean system and catalyse new opportunities for sustainable development of this massive marine ecosystem. The vision of the Ocean Decade is 'the science we need for the ocean we want'. The Ocean Decade provides a convening framework for scientists and stakeholders from diverse sectors to develop the scientific knowledge and the partnerships needed to accelerate and harness advances in ocean science to achieve a better understanding of the ocean system, and to deliver science-based solutions to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The UN General Assembly mandated UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) to coordinate the preparations and implementation of the Decade.

Find out more at <http://oceandecade.org>

Source: UNESCO Press Release