



The oceans - a wealth of opportunities

The event will take place on Wednesday 20 September 09:00 – 10:15
in the ECOSOC Chamber at UN Headquarters in New York.

The oceans are the lifeblood of our planet. They offer huge potential for human development, and ensuring their sound management and sustainable use is a vital part of our work to achieve the SDGs. The oceans are an important source of food and energy, as well as providing transport routes and key ecosystem services to the world.

Sustainable use and blue growth

In the decades ahead, the world's population will need more food, medicines, energy, minerals and other resources. If we manage our oceans sustainably, we can harvest more resources and create jobs and income for millions of people. The key is to promote sustainable blue growth. We must develop forms of production and consumption that have less impact on the marine environment than is the case today.

Sound resource management is essential. We need to find ways of improving the environmental performance of existing ocean-based industries, and we need to develop new future-oriented industries that have less environmental impact. We must establish and strengthen management regimes that both promote the potential for business development and safeguard sustainable use of marine resources.

Clean and healthy oceans

Plastic pollution and other forms of marine pollution have negative impacts on biodiversity and sustainable development. Climate change and non-sustainable uses of the oceans, such as overfishing, pose enormous challenges. It is vital that we work together to increase investments in sustainable ocean management. In order to do this, we must ensure that we have the right tools and the right partnerships to protect our environment, grow our economies and achieve prosperity for the world's population.

Many countries have substantial marine resources and considerable potential to further develop their blue industries. By sharing experience and knowledge gained from the private sector and from different marine management models we will be better positioned to find sustainable solutions to the challenges we are facing today.

The Law of the Sea provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources. Its effective implementation, combined with implementation of other relevant legal instruments, is crucial if we are to be able to reap the benefits offered by marine resources, protect marine biodiversity and prevent conflicts in the maritime domain.

Working together for the oceans

The aim of the event is to promote action and international partnerships that will strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of our oceans and marine resources.

It should inspire stakeholders to develop policies and tools designed to create economic development, reduce poverty and improve ocean management that take ecological limits and climate change properly into account. By sharing experience and knowledge, it will be easier to find sustainable solutions to today's challenges. How can we ensure closer coordination between the various ocean initiatives and actors in the time ahead?

The event will be hosted by Ms Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, and co-sponsored by Mr Tommy Remengesau, President of the Republic of Palau.

Ms Solberg is co-chair of the group of SDG Advocates, who work to promote awareness, ownership and results in the global SDG campaign.

The event will be organised as a panel discussion, and political leaders and high-level participants from the business sector and regional organisations will share their perspectives on the potential that lies in the sustainable use of the oceans.

Moderator Mr Andrew Revkin, environmental journalist and author