



Help Design the European Ocean Pact - Fisheries and Oceans Dialogues facilitated by the European Blue Forum

As announced in European Commission President von der Leyen's Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029, the European Commission is preparing a "European Ocean Pact" that should ensure coherence across all policy areas linked to the oceans. In her mission letter to the Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, Mr Costas Kadis, the President asks him to "organise Fisheries and Oceans Dialogues, notably to help design the European Ocean Pact in a collaborative and inclusive way and to listen to the views of all stakeholders, including small-scale and artisanal fisheries".

The European Blue Forum, launched in May 2023 has been working for more than a year around a diversity of topics, all converging to develop a sustainable and desirable future of the European seas. Based on its ability to mobilise its more than 600 members and engage with the 'Blue Community'; and wider European Citizens on matters related to the Blue Economy, the European Blue Forum has been invited to facilitate the first Fisheries and Oceans Dialogues on 5th March 2025 in Brussels to gather input to the upcoming European Ocean Pact.

Preliminary program

As we embark on the journey towards a sustainable and thriving future for our Ocean, it is imperative to recognize the interconnectedness of ocean health, biodiversity, and economic prosperity. The European Commission has outlined an ambitious vision for the next five years, encapsulated in the forthcoming European Ocean Pact. This pact aims to ensure coherence across all policy areas linked to the oceans, adopting a holistic approach to ocean governance.

The pact will strategically pursue the equally important objectives of **ensuring a healthy and productive ocean, by protecting biodiversity; boosting the EU's sustainable blue economy; expanding the EU's marine knowledge framework, reinforcing international ocean governance and developing resilience and opportunities for coastal communities**. As part of the event on 5th March 2025, we seek to gather diverse perspectives, particularly from small-scale and artisanal fisheries, to foster a comprehensive and inclusive framework for ocean governance.

The discussions in the main plenary room (GASP) and the side room (JENK) will be structured around four dynamic panel sessions. Each session will **incorporate resilience and opportunities for coastal communities as well as marine knowledge as transversal topics**.

**Help Design the European Ocean Pact:
Fisheries and Oceans Dialogues facilitated by the European Blue Forum**

5th March 2025 – European Ocean Days, Charlemagne Building, Brussels.

DRAFT AGENDA

08:15 – 09:00	Registration and Welcome Coffee
09:00 – 09:40	<p>Introduction by Moderator Laura Sullivan (GASP room).</p> <p>Introduction to the Ocean Pact by Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries</p> <p>Keynote speech by Christophe Clergeau MEP, Chair SEARICA Intergroup, European Parliament</p> <p>Keynote speech by Pascal Lamy, Chair of the Mission Ocean Board & Coordinator of the Jacques Delors Institutes</p>
Panel Session 1: Ocean Health, Productivity and Resilience (GASP room)	
09:40 – 11:00	<p>Join us for our dynamic first session, "Ocean Health, Productivity and Resilience," where will explore critical aspects of ocean health, exploring strategies to protect and restore our ocean and enhance our marine knowledge framework. Recognizing the interconnectedness of ocean health, biodiversity, and social prosperity is crucial. A healthy ocean supports biodiversity, sustains livelihoods, and drives economic growth. It is essential that our actions are knowledge-based, leveraging scientific insights, as well as the knowledge of civil society and local coastal communities, to ensure effective and sustainable ocean governance.</p> <p>Keynote: Humberto Delgado Rosa, Director, DG ENV, European Commission</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monica Verbeek, Executive Director, Seas at Risk 2. Sylvain Blouet, Deputy Director, Côte Agathoise Marine Protected Area 3. Joachim Hjerl, Founder, Havhøst 4. Catarina Frazao Santos, Invited Assistant Professor, University of Lisbon <p>Interactive consultation with stakeholders: 40 Minutes</p>
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
Panel Session 2: Achieving a Sustainable Blue Economy (GASP room)	
11:30 – 12:50	<p>The session "Achieving a Sustainable Blue Economy," will focus on strategies to develop a blue economy that is both sustainable and inclusive. Understanding the vital links between economic resilience, environmental health, and social equity is crucial. A sustainable blue economy supports livelihoods, fosters innovation, and promotes resilient coastal economies. Blue entrepreneurs and SMEs are pivotal in this transition, driving innovation and creating sustainable business models that address environmental challenges and generate economic opportunities.</p> <p>Keynotes: Mechthild Wörsdörfer, Deputy Director General, DG ENER, European Commission</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laurence Martin, Secretary General, Italian Maritime Cluster 2. Cristina Simioli, Director Offshore Energy and Nature, Renewable Grid Initiative 3. Seamus Breathnach, Chair, Fisheries Local Action Group West, Ireland 4. David Abril Molins, EU Project Manager, Waterborne Technology Platform <p>Interactive consultation with stakeholders: 40 Minutes</p>
12:50-13:00	Closing remarks for the morning sessions by Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission.

13:00- 14:45	Networking Lunch
Panel Session 3: International Fisheries Governance (JENK room)	
14:45 – 15:00	<p>Introduction by Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission</p> <p>Keynote speech by João Aguiar Machado, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the European Union to the WTO</p>
15:00 – 16:30	<p>A consultation and interactive session to help shape the external dimension of the European Ocean Pact focused on a future EU Strategy for fisheries external action that ensures a level playing field. The session will discuss how the EU’s fisheries external action can combine a set of EU policies and instruments to strengthen environmental, economic and social sustainability of external fisheries and accelerate the pace to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 “Life below Water”.</p> <p>Moderator: Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Odran Corcoran, WWF European Policy Office, Brussels 2. Pablo Abaunza Martinez, Centro Oceanografico de Santander, Instituto Espanol de Oceanografia, Spain 3. Selim Azzi, Global Tuna Alliance, Hoofddorp, Netherlands 4. Daniel Mackintosch, Captain, JC Mackintosch, Tarifa, Spain <p>Interactive consultation with stakeholders: 60 Minutes</p>
16:30 – 16:45	Coffee Break
Panel Session 4: International Ocean Governance (JENK room)	
16:45 – 17:40	<p>A consultation and interactive session to focus on the main priorities of the EU’s international ocean governance policy and in particular, its priorities for the upcoming Third UN Ocean Conference in Nice, including promoting the entry into force and implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, the establishment of an International Platform on Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) and the international dimension of the European Ocean Pact in the context of a strategic approach to EU ocean diplomacy.</p> <p>Moderator: Kestutis SADAUSKAS, Deputy Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sheila Heymans, Executive Director of the European Marine Board 2. Hans Stausboll, Acting Director Africa, European Commission, DG INTPA 3. Monica Verbeek, Executive Director, Seas at Risk 4. Stefan Asmundsson, President of NEAFC
17:40– 18:00	Closing remarks by Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission.

Logistical Considerations.

The sessions will be streamed online with simultaneous translation provided (FR-DE-EN-IT-ES-EL).

There will be interactive discussion among the panellists, facilitated by the moderator.

We will use both Slido and live questions from the audience. Slido polls will be used to ‘feel the room’ and Q&A for questions. It also allows several means of engagement, so all participants have a chance to contribute.