

Towards The International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS)

Uniting Knowledge, Inspiring Action for a Sustainable Ocean



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The Ocean: Vital Yet in Crisis

The Ocean, essential for life on Earth, is in crisis. Its health is rapidly declining, with major gaps in the implementation of global commitments to Ocean sustainability. Key frameworks, such as Sustainable Development Goal 14 (“Life Below Water”) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, highlight the need for urgent action. A fragmented knowledge base and a lack of actionable policy options hinder progress toward a healthy, vibrant Ocean.

The Need for IPOS

To effectively accelerate transformative action to respond to the escalating ocean crisis, decision-makers need both **political will** and the best available **knowledge** to make informed decisions. Today, there is a clear need and an opportunity for a new mechanism consolidating fragmented knowledge from multiple reports and numerous stakeholders to address the priority needs of decisionmakers. This could be done by bringing together transdisciplinary expertise (natural, social, and economic sciences) as well as knowledge from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, private sector and civil society, and marginalised communities.

Towards IPOS: A Solution for a Sustainable Ocean

IPOS will launch at the 2025 UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3). Embedded within the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade) as a Decade Coordinating Centre or Office. Towards IPOS aims to unify efforts and ensure continuity and legacy. Funding is anticipated from voluntary State contributions and philanthropic sources, with discussions and support already underway.

Why Towards IPOS?

Towards IPOS addresses critical gaps at the knowledge-policy-society interface:

- **Challenge:** Bridging the gap between political ambition and practical implementation of international Ocean targets at local and regional levels.
- **Need:** Rapid access to holistic knowledge and actionable policy solutions tailored to specific contexts.
- **Solution:** Demand-driven services leveraging the best available knowledge and expertise from diverse sources to support knowledge-based decision-making at all scales.



How Towards IPOS Works

- **Process:** Empowered regional offices will coordinate requests, supported by global governance bodies with diverse stakeholder representation.
- **Outcome:** Accelerated implementation of international Ocean commitments informed by holistic knowledge, enabling an equitable transition to a healthy and sustainable Ocean.

Services:

Action Requests are a service that will deliver tailored policy options within **one year** in response to formal requests from States or groups of States. It will involve multi-stakeholder working groups that synthesize diverse knowledge sources to produce peer-reviewed outputs.

Rapid Responses will deliver **urgent, peer-reviewed knowledge** within weeks to support ocean policy decisions. Using a **curated AI tool**, Towards IPOS will synthesise the best available science, Indigenous knowledge, and expert insights into **concise, actionable outputs** like policy briefs or best practices. Guided by **ethical AI standards**, this service ensures **timely, evidence-based solutions** to help governments meet their ocean commitments.

The Ocean Catalyst is a platform that will facilitate **stakeholder dialogues** on ocean policy solutions, barriers, and emerging priorities. It will enable **knowledge-sharing** between scientists, policymakers, Indigenous communities, civil society, and the private sector to accelerate action toward ocean sustainability.

Value Added

The value added by Towards IPOS is particularly crucial for nation States with less developed or resource constrained scientific capacity, or those with cross-sectoral sustainability challenges that would benefit from having independent evidence to support reconciling different viewpoints.

Building Momentum

Towards IPOS benefits from growing global political and scientific support, with backing from the European Commission, [China](#) (6 May 2024), [Monaco](#) (24 September 2024), [Canada](#) (26 September 2024), [Chile](#) (21 November 2024), and a [coalition of scientific institutions](#).

The Time for Action Is Now

The Ocean's degradation—due to climate change, pollution, and overfishing—threatens humanity's future. Multilateral frameworks demonstrate rising awareness, but a significant gap remains between agreed targets and tangible actions. Decision-makers must act swiftly under conditions of uncertainty and change, guided by a precautionary approach to implement their international commitments for the sustainable management and conservation of the ocean.

The rapid evolution of the Towards IPOS concept reflects an urgent reality: the Ocean is in trouble. Through coherent and effective action, IPOS will ensure the Ocean's future as a cornerstone for humanity's survival and prosperity.



Experts:



Tanya Brodie Rudolph

Tanya Brodie Rudolph is an International Environmental and Ocean lawyer based in Cape Town, South Africa. She is passionate about sustainable use, management and protection of the marine environment and resources, with a particular focus on how to bridge these objectives with science, indigenous and local knowledge, innovation and technology. She is a research fellow at the Centre for Sustainability Transitions in Stellenbosch, and the Co-lead of the emerging International Platform for Ocean Sustainability. With a pioneering spirit and a vision for leading edge changes in laws and policies that reflect societal shifts, Tanya is an expert on the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, a member of the Advisory Committee for the Global ONCE program, a member of Earth System Task Force, part of Women Leadership in Marine Technology and Science, and a member of Women's Actions for the Ocean Coalition.



Françoise Gaill

Marine biologist, specialist of deep-sea ecosystems, Françoise Gaill is an Emeritus director of research at CNRS (French National Scientific Research Centre) where she headed the Ecology and Environment Institute. She is the co-lead of Towards an International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS).

Towards IPOS in the media:

[Research sets sail for the ocean - CNRS](#)

[Global Support for the International Panel for Ocean Sustainability \(IPOS\) Grows – Environment Energy Leader](#)

[Campaign Reminds Companies to Include 'Mother Nature in the Boardroom' – Sustainable Brands](#)

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