



2nd Senior Governmental Officials Roundtable
(0900-1040, UTC+5, 12 March 2025, the Auditorium, 3rd floor, MEXT Building, Japan)

The Ocean is vital to our life and our planet. Ocean science is key to ensuring its sustainability, as it unlocks the secrets of our marine systems, ensuring they continue to provide life-sustaining ecosystem services, protect incredible biodiversity, and power the global economy. By tackling human-driven challenges, it shapes smarter policies and practices. Ocean science isn't just about understanding the oceans—it's about securing a thriving, sustainable future for our planet and generations to come.

Over the past decade, the ever-growing recognition of the importance of ocean science is evident in various international instruments, frameworks, and conferences. Of particular relevance is the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

The IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) has been at the forefront of advancing ocean science, fostering cooperation, and strengthening ocean science-policy-society interface for the sustainable development of ocean, marine and coastal resources in the Western Pacific and adjacent areas. Its essential role and unwavering efforts in building meaningful partnerships and catalyzing transformative ocean science solutions are prominently reflected in its contribution to the Ocean Decade. Notable achievements include the resounding success of [the UN Ocean Decade Kickoff Conference for the Western Pacific and adjacent areas](#) (Online, 25-26 November 2021), and [the 2nd UN Ocean Decade Conference for the Western Pacific & 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference](#) (Bangkok, 22-25 April, 2024).

To strengthen the ocean science-policy-society interface, the Sub-Commission launched the Senior Governmental Officials (SGOs) Roundtable, aimed at bridging scientific knowledge, policymaking, and societal needs to enable more effective and sustainable management of the ocean. [The 1st SGOs Roundtable](#), held on 5 April 2023, Jakarta, culminated in the adoption of the [SGOs Jakarta Statement on the Ocean Decade](#), which underscores the commitment of senior officials to advancing the goals of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

As the Ocean Decade reaches its midpoint, alongside the development of international instruments and frameworks, there is an increasing need to exchange views about the progress of Ocean Decade, share experience and perspectives on science-informed ocean management and conservation practices, identify new opportunities to advance ocean science and cooperation, and further strengthening the ocean science-policy-society interface.

In this context, and on the occasion of [the 15th Intergovernmental Session of the Sub-Commission](#) (11-13 March 2025, Tokyo, Japan), we are pleased to organize the 2nd Senior Governmental Officials Roundtable (SGOs Roundtable). This platform will serve to foster exchange and collaboration among Member States in the region, advancing the shared vision of achieving “The Science We Need for the Ocean We Want”.

Objectives

The SGOs Roundtable, chaired by the host country, Japan, will bring together senior officials from national competent agencies in the region to

- **Review progress and identify challenges** in the implementation of the Ocean Decade in the region, building on [the high-level commitments made at the UN Ocean Decade Regional Kick-off Conference for the Western Pacific](#) (25 November 2021) and [the outcome document](#) of the [1st Senior Governmental Officials \(SGO\) Roundtable](#) (4 April 2023, Jakarta);
- **Exchange views and perspectives** on the role of ocean science and cooperation in sustainable ocean planning and management, informing policy and decision-making, and enabling Member States to fulfill their commitments to international obligations¹;
- **Provide actionable recommendations** to guide the Sub-Commission in mobilizing further efforts for the sustainable development of ocean, marine and coastal resources in the region .

Tentative programme and outcome

The SGOs Roundtable is scheduled to take place around 1 hour and 40 minutes (with the possibility of an extension), at 0900-1040, UTC+5, 12 March 2025, the Auditorium, 3rd floor, MEXT Building, Tokyo. It will consist of the following:

1. **Welcoming remarks and briefing** by the Chair country
2. **Statements, perspectives, and recommendations** from SGOs
3. **Open discussions**
4. **The SGOs Roundtable Outcome Document**

The Roundtable is expected to come up with a joint outcome document- the *SGOs Tokyo Statement*. The document will emphasize the importance of advancing ocean science, promoting international cooperation, and strengthening the ocean science-policy-society interface. It will also outline concrete actions to support the achievement of UN Ocean Decade, as well as other relevant international instruments and frameworks.

¹ Including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (especially Goal 14), international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and the ongoing negotiation for a UN treaty to end plastic pollution.