

Agenda 3.2

Overview of Progress Since the Last Session (WESTPAC-XV, 11-12 March 2025, Tokyo, Japan) and the Current Status of the Sub-Commission

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Decade Coordination Office, IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific Pacific, IOC/UNESCO

Sixteenth Intergovernmental Session of the
IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC-XVI)
Hangzhou, China, 10-12 November 2026

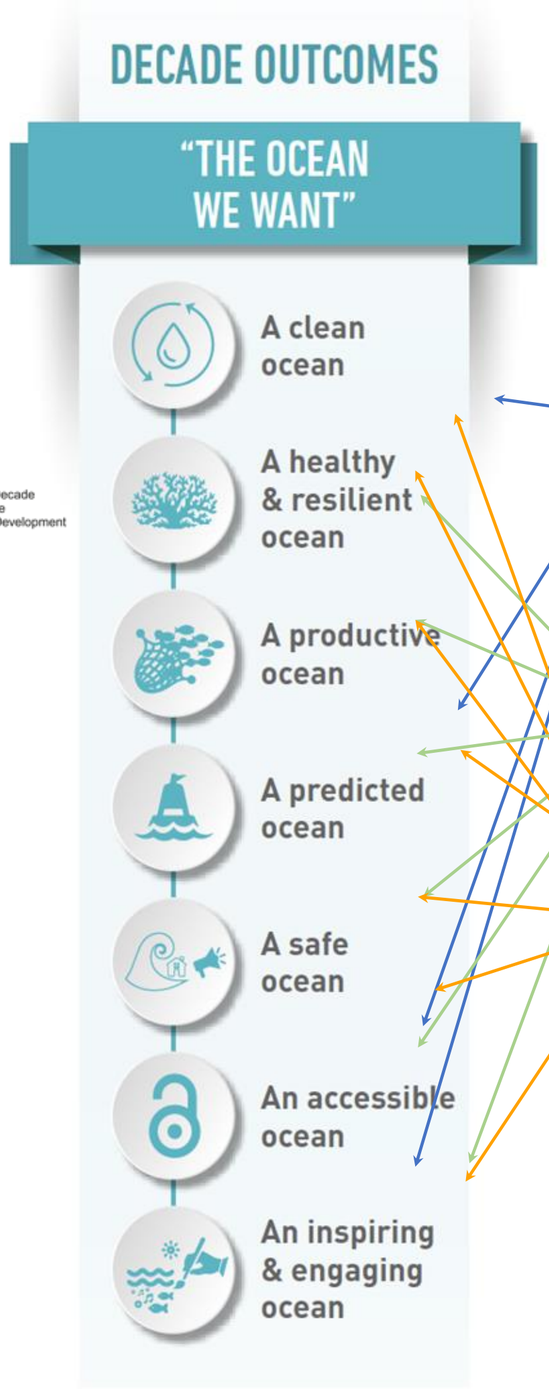
Looking Back to Move Forward !

Major outcomes of the last Session (WESTPAC-XV, 11-13 March 2025, Tokyo, Japan)



- **Elections**
  Chair: Tan Shau Hwai (Malaysia)
  Vice-Chairs: SungHyun Nam (Korea),
  Aletta T. Yñiguez (Philippines), Vyachesla Lobanov (Russia)
- **Next Session and International Marine Science Conference**
  March or April 2027 in the Philippines

- **Senior Government Officials Roundtable**
  - *Tokyo SGO Statement* : strengthen the ocean science-policy interface, facilitate the exchange of national experiences, and promote science-informed decision-making
- **Regional Action Framework for Accelerating MSP (2025-2030)**
- **Establishment of six new initiatives in response to the needs**
  - *Prediction of Marine Ecosystem Changes* in the NWP, 2025-2030;
  - *Methane Fluxes* and their Impacts on Climate and Ecosystem, 2025-2029;
  - WG on *Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration (Mangroves)*, 2025-2028; and WG on *Seagrass Research, Conservation*, 2025-2028
  - TF on *BBNJ* and TF on *Ocean literacy*
- **Programme and Budget (2026-2027)**
  - Valued at over USD 6 M, serving as a guide on the activities that Member States would like to jointly promote and seek funding, either in cash or in kind, to support their implementation.
- **Side event: National Decade Committee Forum**



2021 2030 United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

WESTPAC PRIORITY PROGRAMME AREAS

A: Ocean-based solutions to climate change

B: Marine biodiversity conservation, ocean ecosystem and human health, and blue economy

C: Marine Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation

D: Knowledge development for emerging issues

UN-42: WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference (Contribution)

WESTPAC PROGRAMMES/WORKING GROUPS
2025-2027 (total number: 30 including RTRCs)

A1: NEAR-GOOS
A2: eCORE-SEAS/CoastPredict (SEA-GOOS)
A3: Ocean Acidification (SEA-GOOS) as a part of UN 39
A4: Changing Asian Marginal Seas and their responses
A5: Methane Fluxes and their Impact on Climate and Ecosystem in the Indo-Pacific Region (2025-2028)
UN24: 2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and its adjacent areas
UN46: Collaborations for NWP Marine Ecosystem Change Prediction

B 1 Coral Reef Conservation, Restoration and Resilience
B 2: Marine toxins and seafood safety
B3: Ocean remote sensing for habitat mapping
B4: Harmful jellyfish research and monitoring
B5: Harmful algae blooms
UN22: Asian rivers' plastic emission to ocean

C1: Ocean Oxygen Network (WG) as a part of UN39
TF2025: BBNJ
TF2025: Ocean literacy
WG2023: Small island research and development
WG2023: Citizen science
WG2023: Traditional and local knowledge
WG2025: Seagrass Research in the Indo-Western Pacific
WG2025: Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration with focus on Mangroves

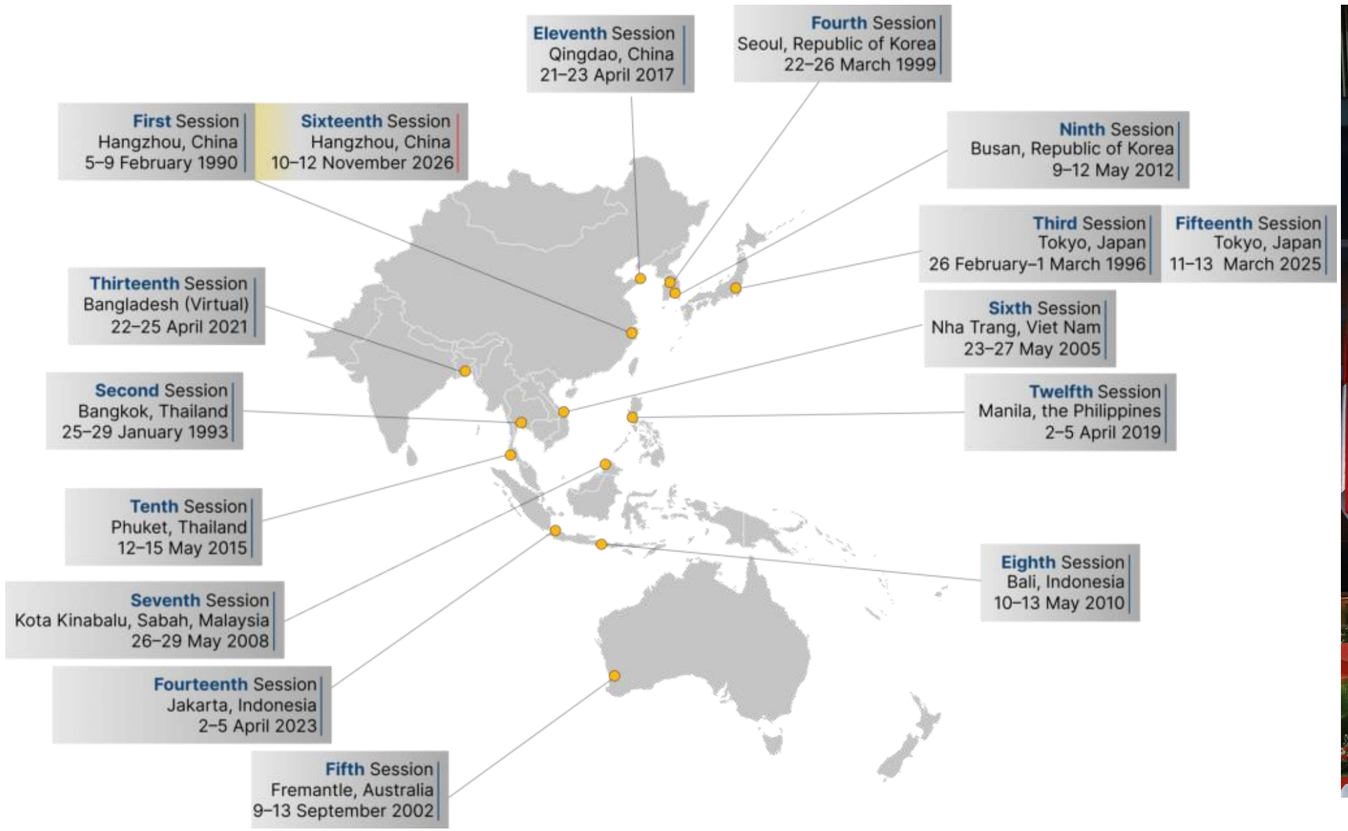
UN23: Regional Network of Training and Research Centers （RTRCs） on Ocean Science
- RTRC on Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health (BRIN, Indonesia)
- RTRC on Ocean Dynamics and Climate (FIO/MNR, China)
- RTRC on Marine Toxins and Seafood Safety (IO/VAST, Vietnam)
- RTRC on Coral Reef Restoration and MPAs (UPMSI, Philippines)
- RTRC on Plastic and Microplastic Research (ECNU, China)
- RTRC on Coastal Contaminant Monitoring and Marine Innovative Technology (CityU, Hong Kong SAR, China)

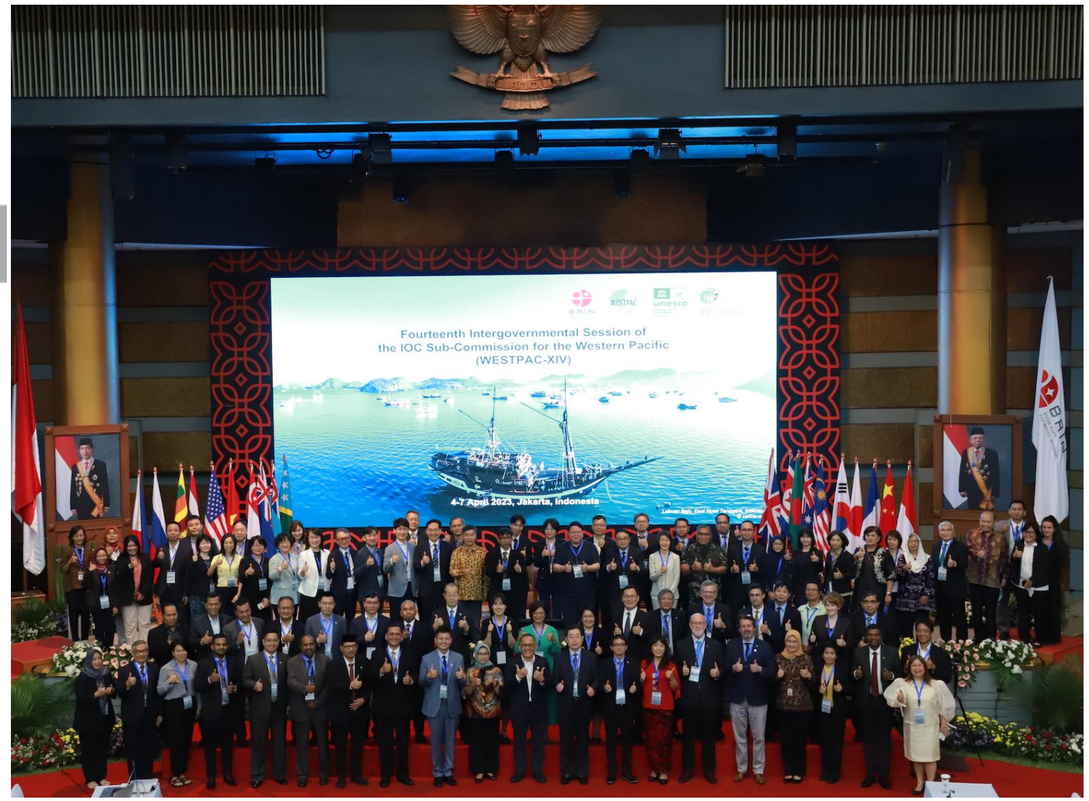
UN21: Marine Spatial Planning
UN39: Ocean Solutions in the East Asian Seas

Key Areas of Action 1

Strengthen the ocean science – policy interface

- Strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms





Key Areas of Action 1

Strengthen the ocean science – policy interface

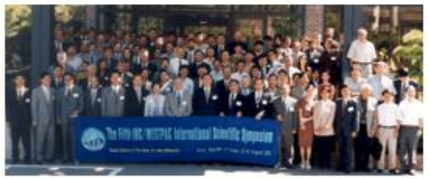
- Advance ocean science and knowledge

The WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference means a great deal for our developing countries!


Australia, 1986


Malaysia, 1991


Indonesia, 1994


Japan, 1998

Korea, 2001

China, 2004


Malaysia, 2008



Korea, 2011




Vietnam, 2014
About 550 participants


China, 2017
About 700 participants


Thailand, 2024
About 1200 participants


Regional Planning Workshop, Japan, 2019



Regional Dialogue on Co-designing Ocean Science for the Ocean We Want, Online, 2020



UN Ocean Decade Kickoff Conference for the Western Pacific, Online, 2021

Key Areas of Action 1

Strengthen the ocean science – policy interface

- Strategic Consultation & Co-design and co-development



Senior Government Officials Roundtable and Advisory Group



SGOs Roundtable, 2023, Jakarta; 2025, Tokyo



Advisory Group Strategic Meeting, 28-30 January 2026, Penang , Malaysia

Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- Accelerate marine spatial planning in the Western Pacific

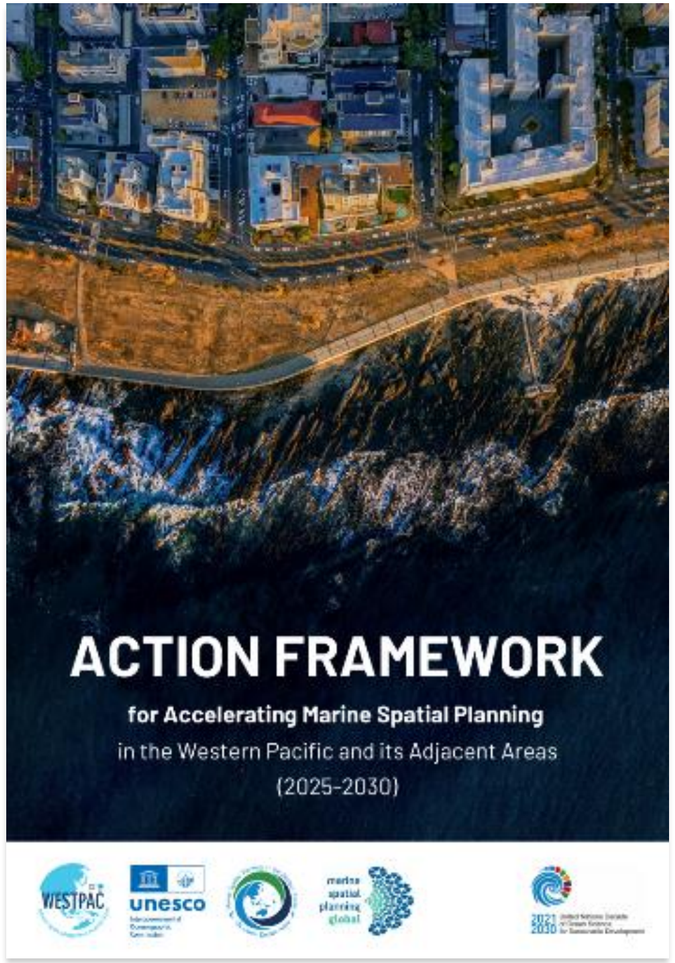
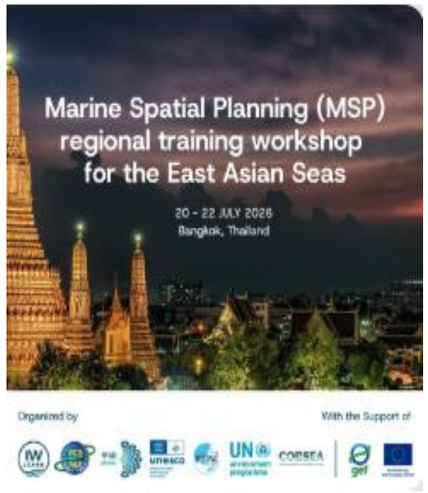




Figure 1
Action Framework for Accelerating MSP in the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas



2nd WESTPAC Workshop on Marine Spatial Planning, 14-16 October 2025, Chonburi, Thailand





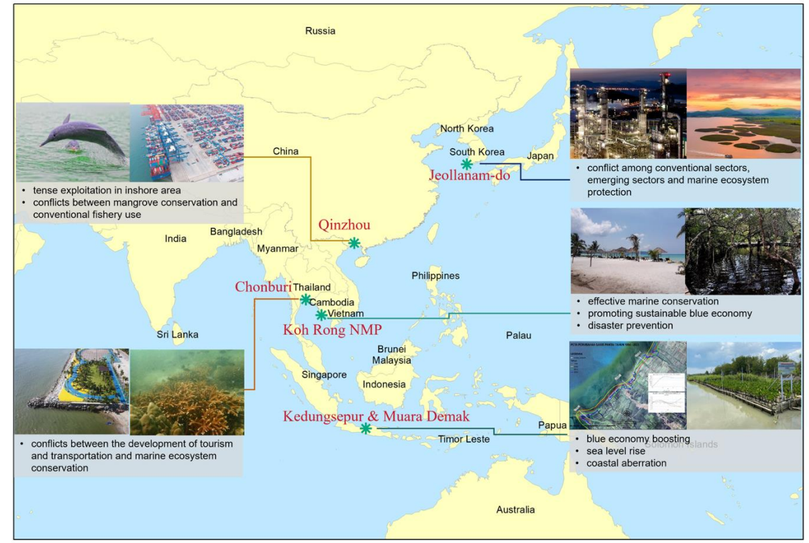
Regional Training Workshop 20-22 July 2026, Bangkok, Thailand

Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action







13 Experts from 8 countries of the regional GOE

1 Support Office

3 Regional mspforum and workshops

6 Demonstration sites in 5 countries

7 National trainings on MSP

600+ Stakeholders involved in UN 21 activities










Regional MSP Forum	Establishment of the Regional Group of Experts	1st WESTPAC MSP Expert Workshop	Unveiling of the Chonburi Demonstration Site	Field Visit to the Demonstration Site in Indonesia	Training at the Qinzhou Demonstration Site, China	Field Trip in Jeollanam-do Demonstration Site	Approval of the MSP Action Framework	2nd WESTPAC MSP Expert Workshop	MSP Field Survey in Phang Nga Bay	Workshop focus on MSP and coastal Management
12/2022	04/2023	11/2023	12/2023	04/2024	05/2024	08/2024	03/2025	10/2025	08/2026	09/2026

Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- Advancing blue carbon ecosystem research and restoration- Mangroves and Seagrass





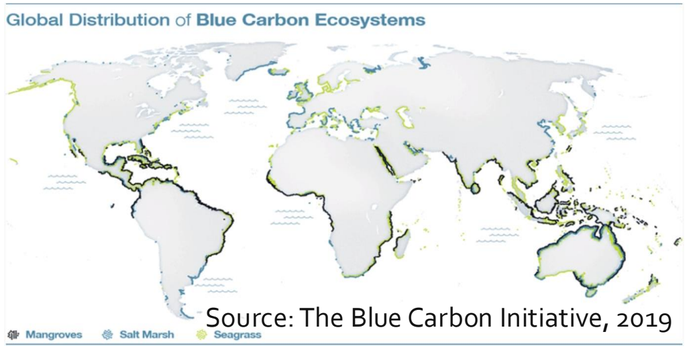


Regional Seagrass Workshop
20-22 July 2026, Bangkok, Thailand



Blue Partnership Action Fund (BPAF)-SEE





Source: The Blue Carbon Initiative, 2019

Regional Mangrove Workshop,
6-8 November 2025, Xiamen, China

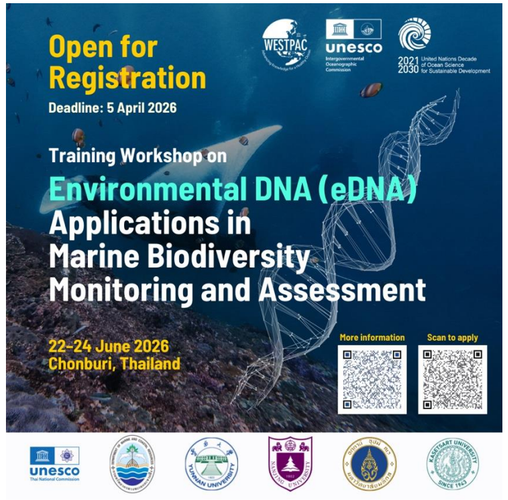
Key Areas of Action-2

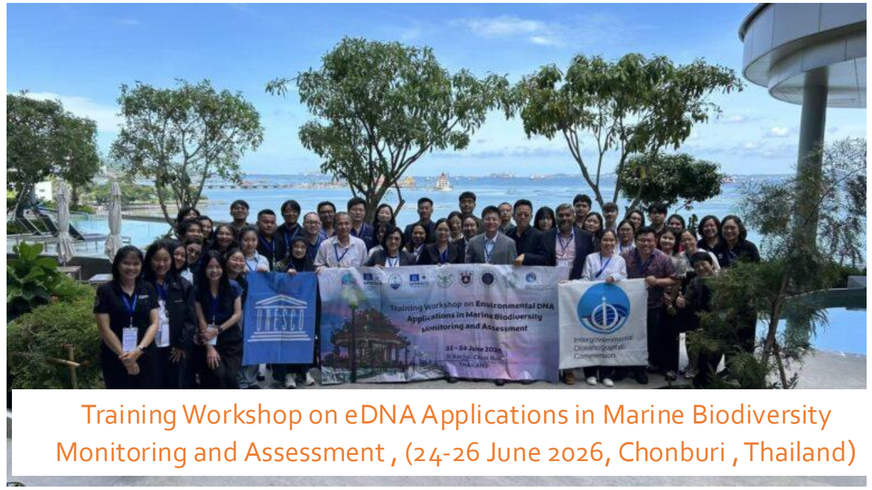
Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- *Harness the potential of environmental DNA for marine biodiversity conservation*

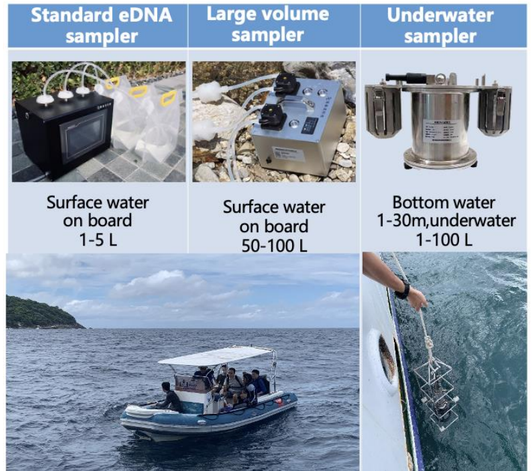


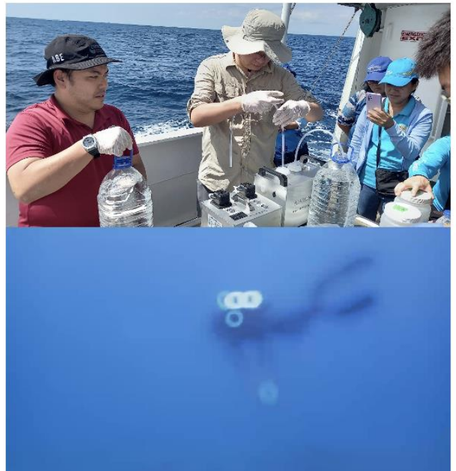
Training Workshop on Using eDNA for monitoring marine biodiversity, (27-29 Nov 2023, Phuket, Thailand)

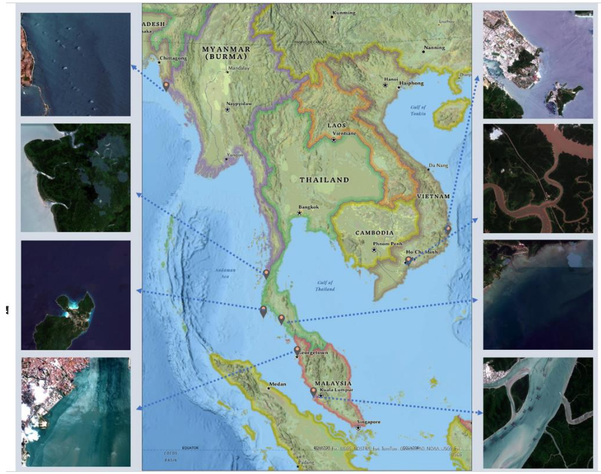




Training Workshop on eDNA Applications in Marine Biodiversity Monitoring and Assessment , (24-26 June 2026, Chonburi , Thailand)











From DNA Barcoding to Environmental DNA

Evolution of the Sub-Commission's efforts in marine biodiversity research and monitoring



DRMREEF-I inception
Bangkok, 5-6, August 2013



DRMREEF-II inception
Qingdao, 1-2 Dec 2016



DRMREEF-II wrap-up
Seoul, 20-21 Jan 2018



DRMREEF-III Reception
Nha Trang, 24-25 Oct 2019





Second regional eDNA training workshop
in Chonburi, 22-24 June 2026



Training Course on DNA barcoding
Nha Trang, 20-21 April 2014

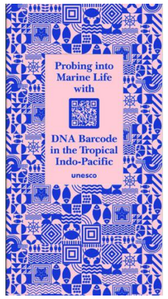


Molecular Taxonomy training
RTRC-MarBEST, Jakarta, 25 Sep- 5 Oct 2017





DNA barcode publications, 2021- 2022





First regional eDNA training workshop
in Phuket, 27-29 Nov 2023

2013

DRMREEF launched

WESTPAC project on DNA taxonomy and coral reef recruitment monitoring

2013–2018

DNA barcoding capacity

Successive project phases: scientific networks, species identification and reference information

2019-2022

Outputs and Transition toward eDNA

2023

Advancing eDNA applications

Strategic direction: From molecular species identification → biodiversity monitoring → evidence-based conservation and ecosystem management

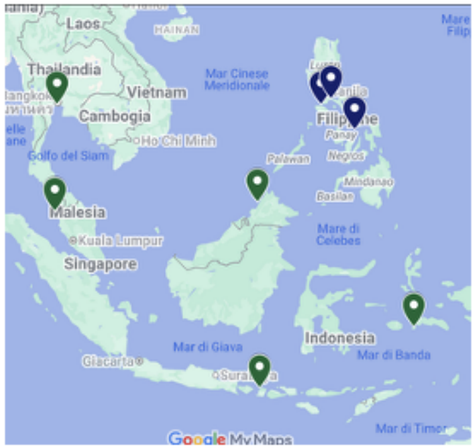
Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- *eCORE-SEAS: Enhancing Coastal Resilience in the South-East Asian Seas*

GOOS | CoastPredict
with The Global Ocean Observing System

eCORE-SEAS Adaptation Fund Proposal



Project Objectives

Overall Aim: Strengthen national and regional capacity to monitor, predict, and assess coastal hazards and their risks in the short and long term, and to deliver knowledge, science-based tools, and solutions to build the resilience of coastal communities.

01	02	03	04	05
Enhance national infrastructure for ocean hazard monitoring	Impact Forecasting for coastal risk management	Coastal climate downscaling for adaptation planning	Decision support systems for sustainable coastal economies & communities	Institutional & private sector engagement for sustainability

Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- *2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and Adjacent Areas (CSK-2)*



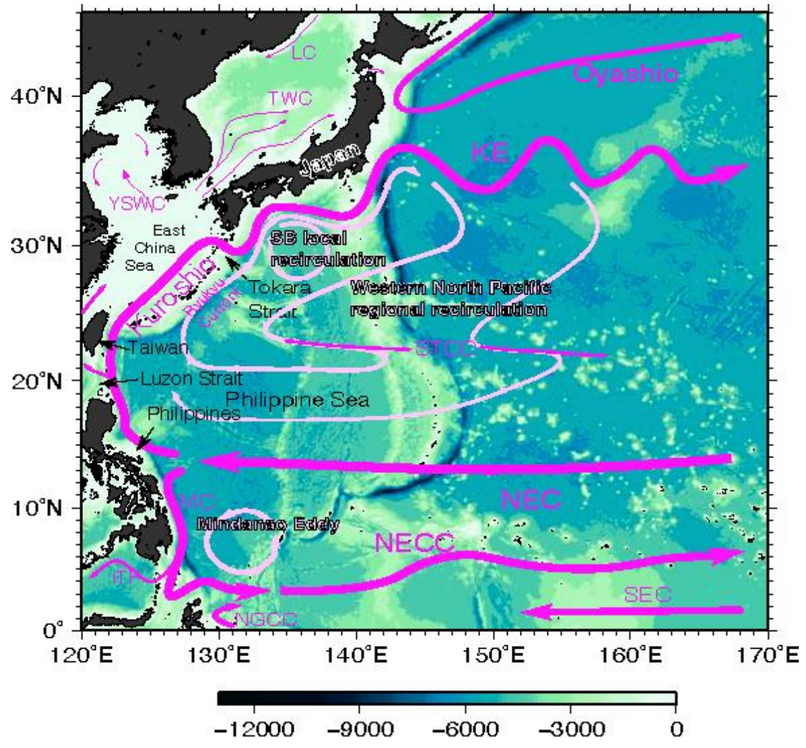
Second CSK-2 Science Symposium (13-14 Nove 2024, Sendai, Japan)



Fourth ISG meeting (4-6 Dec 2023, Qingdao, China)



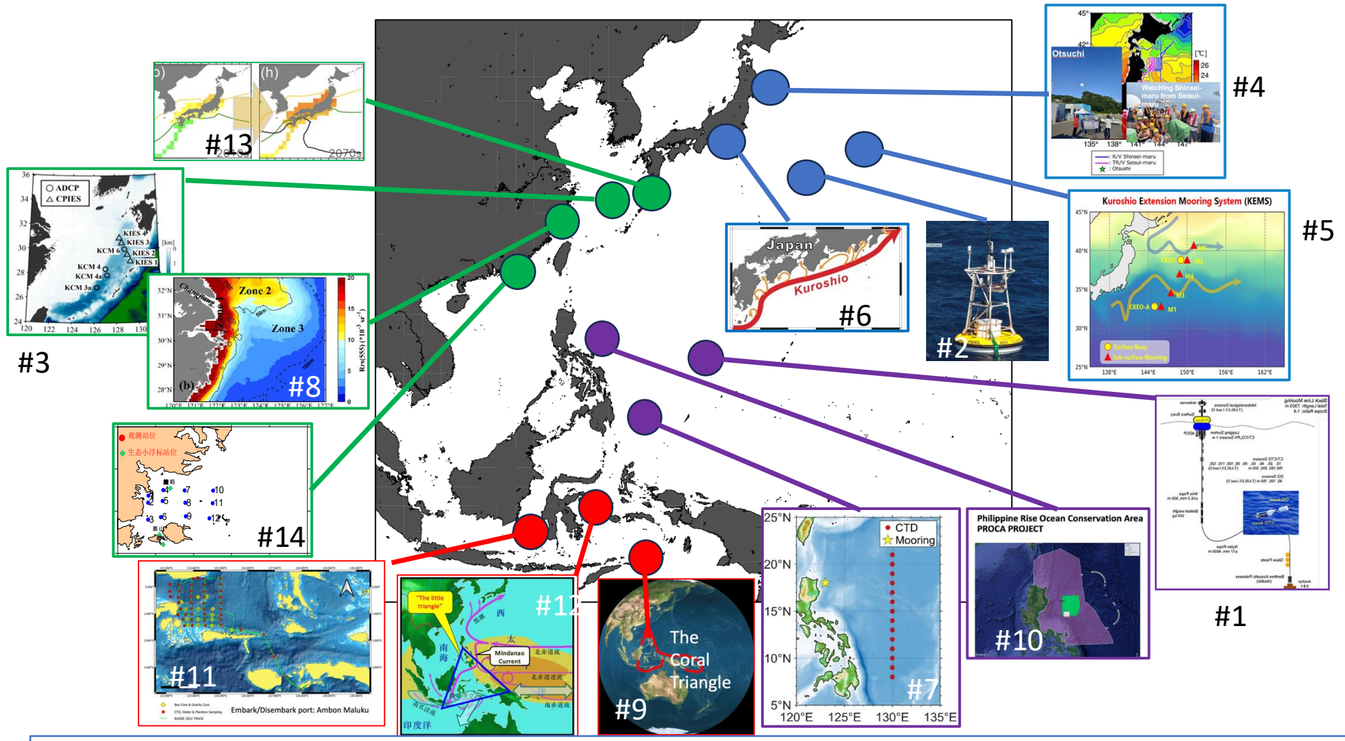
Fifth ISG meeting (15 Nov 2024, Sendai , Japan)

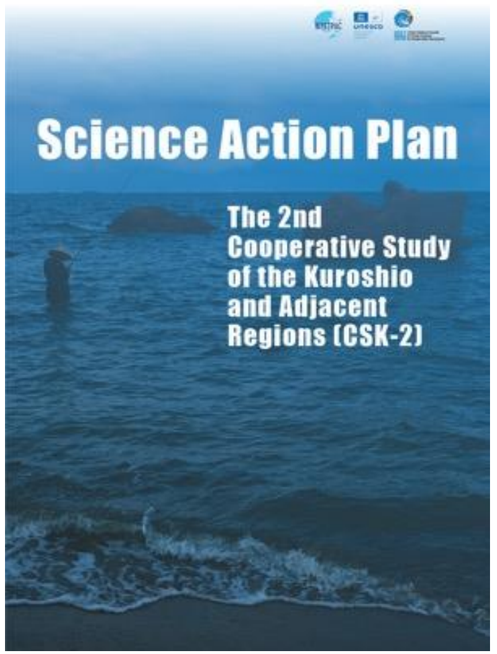


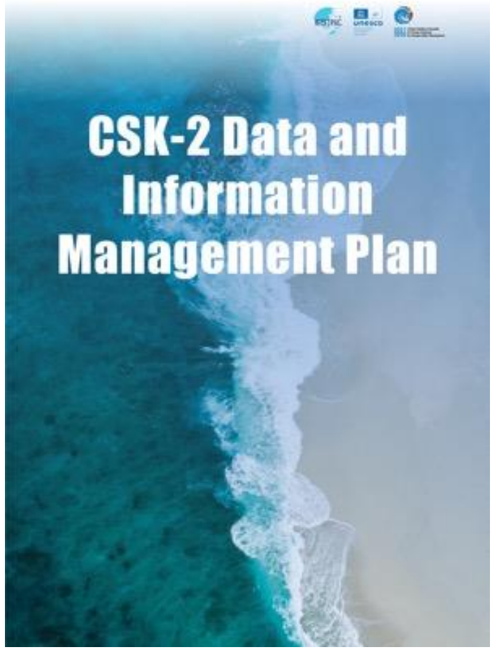
Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- *2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and Adjacent Areas (CSK-2)*







Objective 1: Understand the Kuroshio and its impacts on global and regional weather and climate, with the societal outcome of improving regional weather forecasts and climate predictions.

Objective 2: Understand the Kuroshio and its interactions with marine ecosystems, with the societal outcome of improving fisheries and aquaculture management along the Kuroshio and in adjacent regions.

Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

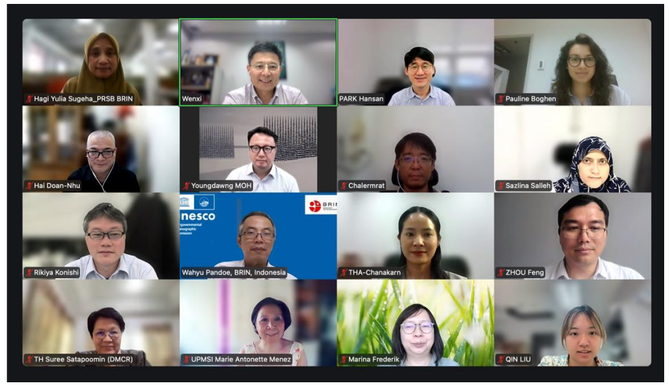
- Task Forces/Working Groups on Emerging Issues



Intersessional Task Force on BBNJ

To strengthen the scientific, technical and institutional capacities of WESTPAC Member States to effectively implement the BBNJ Agreement through **enhanced scientific assessment, ocean observations and data, science–policy–law interfaces, marine scientific research, and regional cooperation and technology transfer.**

Open ended, 18 members from 9 countries



Two online meetings, 15 May 2026, 22 September 2026

Key Areas of Action-2

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- Task Forces/Working Groups on Emerging Issues

Intersessional Task Force on Ocean Literacy

"Promoting Ocean Literacy for Sustainable Development in the Western Pacific"

WESTPAC Intersessional Task Force on Ocean Literacy

Members

An open-ended Group of Experts (GoE) recommended and nominated by Member States, reflecting the multi-stakeholder nature of ocean literacy

15 Experts **11** Member States

9 Females **1** ECOP

Group of Experts


Abigail Sisti
NOAA National Ocean Service, US


Anis Faisal Reza
Gugus Mitigasi Lebak Selatan, Indonesia


Anna Oposa
Save Philippine Seas, the Philippines


Danfeng Weng
Third Institute of Oceanography, China


Dao Viet Ha
Institute of Oceanography, Vietnam


Ferdiansyah Ferdika Faeyza
Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Indonesia


Lalith Amaralal Kariyawasam
National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency, Sri Lanka


Mahadi Mohammad
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia


Mohamed Redza Mohamed Zakaria
University Malaya, Malaysia


Polina Lobanova
Department of Oceanology, Institute of Earth Science, Saint-Petersburg State University, Russia

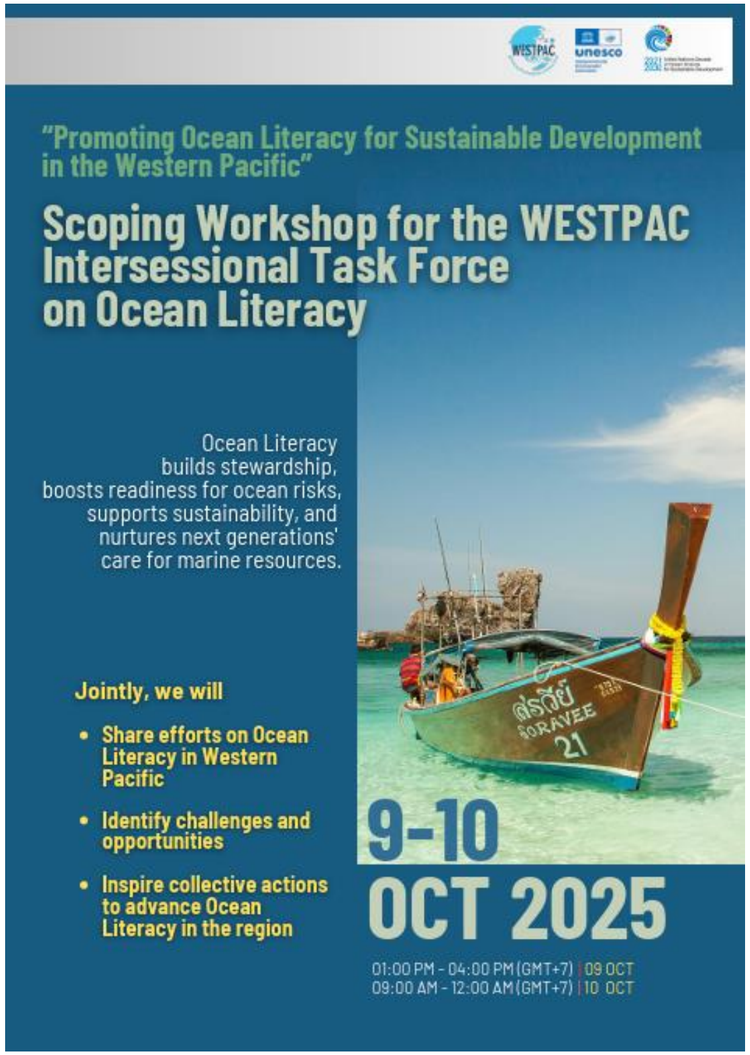

Qicheng Meng
Second Institute of Oceanography, China


Sachiko Oguma
Ocean Policy Research Institute, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan


Soyeona Park
Korea National Ocean Science Museum, Republic of Korea


Suchana Apple Chavanich
Department if Marine Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand


Syarifah Aini Dalimunthe
Research Center for Population, National Research and Innovation Agency, Indonesia



Key Areas of Action-3

Turning ocean science and knowledge into action

- Exploratory ocean literacy initiatives in 2026





Key Areas of Action- 3
Mobilize Actions for the UN Ocean Decade

2019/Tokyo



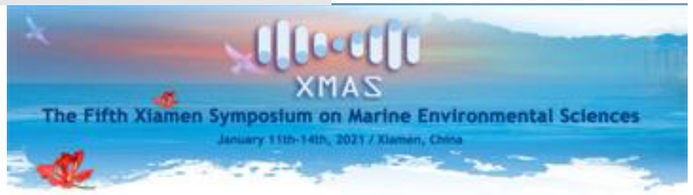
Regional Planning Workshop for the North Pacific on 31 July – 2 August 2019 , Tokyo, Japan

2020/remote



Decade Regional Dialogue on co-design ocean science on 9 November 2020, Remote

2021/Xiamen, China



Special Forum on the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development on September at the X-MAS, on 14 January 2021,Xiamen, China

2019/Qingdao, China



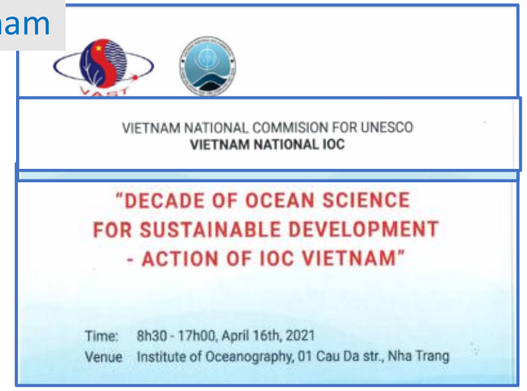
Workshop on UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development on 5-6 September 2019 , Qingdao, China

2021/Malaysia



Launch of Malaysia' s Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development , on March 29-31 , 2021, Malaysia

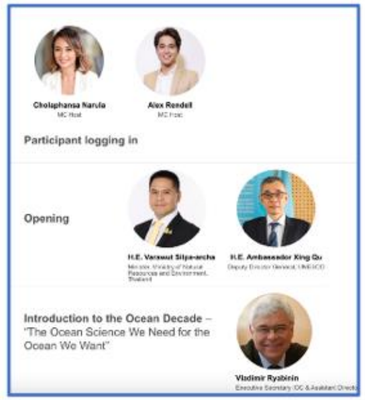
2021/Vietnam



National Workshop on the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development , on 16 April 2021, Nha Trang, Vietnam

Key Areas of Action- 3
Mobilize Actions for the UN Ocean Decade







- More than 3, 000 participants
- High Level Commitments & Stakeholder Roundtable Dialogue
- Voice from the Youth
- **17 UN Ocean Decade Incubators**









Watch the YouTube livestream video!

https://www.ioc-westpac.org/decade-kickoff-conference/progra

Key Areas of Action- 3
Mobilize Actions for the UN Ocean Decade

11th WESTPAC IMSC & 2nd UN Decade Regional Conference

22-25 April 2025, Bangkok, Thailand









- **1,200** on-site participants from **40** countries
- **25** Science Sessions structured around:

  A. Ocean process and climate change

  B. Marine biodiversity, seafood safety and security

  C. Ocean and human health

  D. Emerging ocean science issues

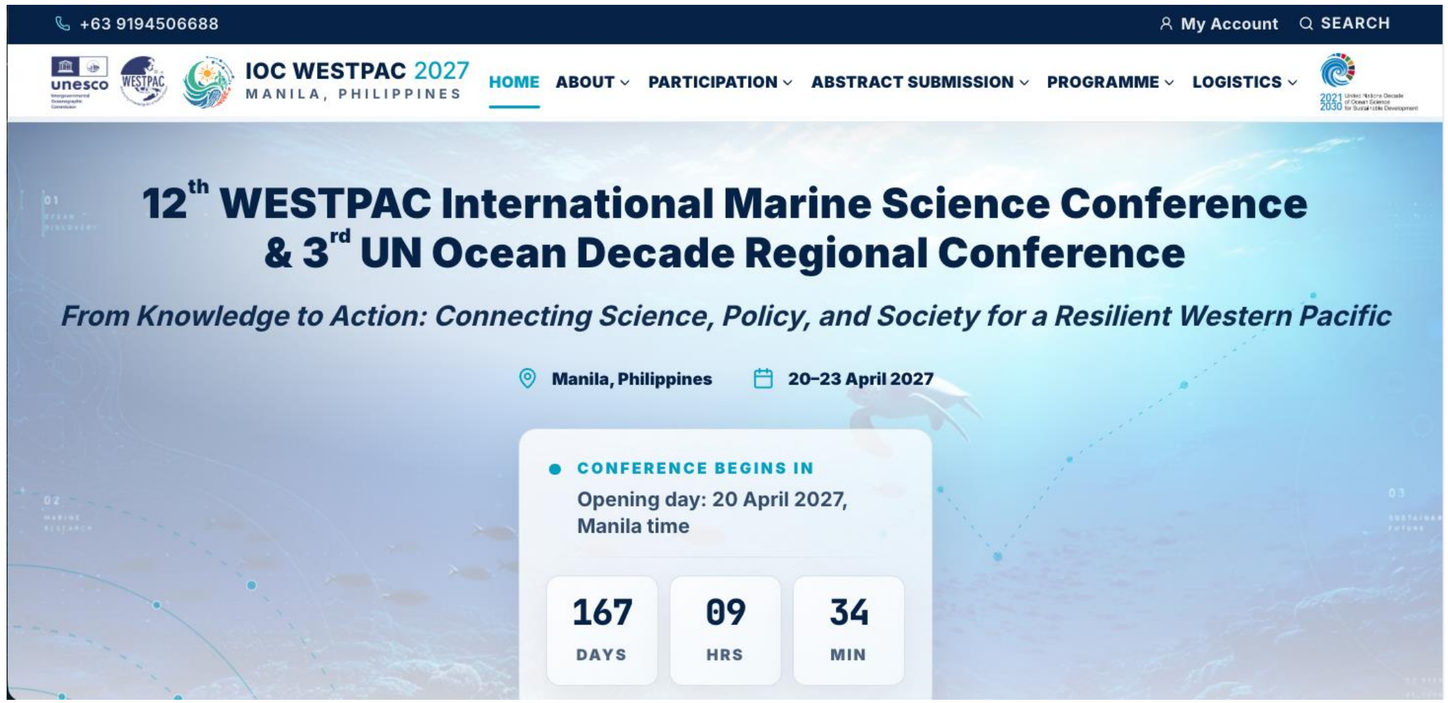
- **1** Special forum with UNEP/GEF SCS SAP
- **12** UN Ocean Decade Incubators
- **13** UN Ocean Decade Workshops
- **1** Townhall and **8** side events
- **5** WESTPAC Outstanding Scientist Awards
- **8** Best Young Scientist Presentations
- **9** Winners for the Coral Reef Restoration Photo Competition

https://ioc-westpac.org/conference-drew-to-a-close-with-resounding-success/

Key Areas of Action- 3
Mobilize Actions for the UN Ocean Decade

12nd WESTPAC IMSC & 3rd UN Decade Regional Conference

20-23 April 2027, Manila, the Philippines





Key Areas of Action- 3

Mobilize Actions for the UN Ocean Decade

UN-21: Accelerate **Marine Spatial Planning** in the Western Pacific and its adjacent region

UN-22: Stem the tide of **Asian's riverine plastic emission** into the ocean

UN-23: Accelerating **Capacity Development Transformations** in the Western Pacific - Regional Network of Training and Research Centers (RTRCs) on Marine Science

UN-24: Explore the **strongest ocean current** in the Western Pacific: 2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and its adjacent regions (CSK-2)

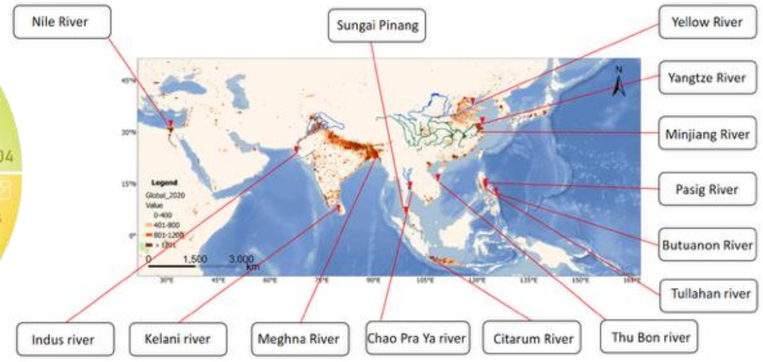
UN-39: Ocean Solutions in the East Asian Seas

UN-42: WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference

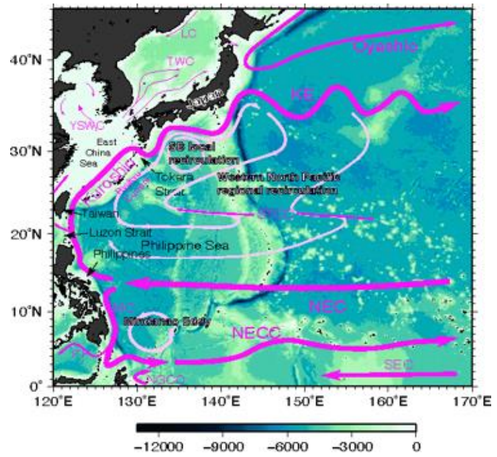
UN-46: Collaborations for **NWP Marine Ecosystem Prediction** (COSMEC)

IOC WESTPAC 2027
MANILA, PHILIPPINES









COSMEC
Collaborations for Northwest Pacific Marine Ecosystem Prediction

Key Areas of Action- 4

Capacity building for development

> *[IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies] are the most efficient platforms for co-designing and co-delivering IOC capacity development activities with Member States, leaving no one behind.*



Weddell Sea, Antarctica
I. Noyan Yilmaz/Shutterstock.com

22

From the IOC Medium Term Strategy (2022-2029)



Integrated capacity development tools

|| Empowerment
|| Integration
|| Adaptability

Moving beyond isolated training activities towards sustained institutional capacity, collaborative action, and long-term regional impact.

Delivering knowledge and services

to serve the needs for ocean sustainability

SDG 14.A: Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer of marine technology

- UNESCO/IOC Regional Network of Training and Research Centers (RTRCs)

  - **Marine biodiversity and ecosystem health** (BRIN, Jakarta, Indonesia)
  - **Coral reef restoration and MPAs** (Bolinao, the Philippines)
  - **Marine toxins and seafood safety** (Nha Trang, Vietnam)
  - **Marine plastic debris and microplastic** (Shanghai, China)
  - **Ocean dynamics and climate** (Qingdao, China)
  - **Coastal contaminant monitoring and marine innovative technology.** (Hong Kong SAR, China)

RTRC specialized trainings and research for SDGs



More RTRCs under establishment based on "demand driven" , specialization, and willingness.



Key Areas of Action- 4

Capacity building for development

Tailored national and international trainings



Remote Sensing for Small Island Environment Mapping, 24-28 Nov 2025



Environmental DNA Applications
22-24 Jun 2026





Area-Based Management for ABNJ
13-17 Jul 2026



Marine Spatial Planning
20-22 July 2026

Financial status

IOC Regular Budget Allocation to WESTPAC

Biennium	WESTPAC (Activity)	IOC (Activity)	IOC Total (Activity + Staff)	Percentage (Activity)
2010–2011 (35C/5)	40,370	3,120,660	9,453,317	1.293%
2012–2013	30,000	889,697	7,531,799	3.372%
2014–2015	30,000+65,000=95,000	3,088,921	9,720,997	3.075%
2016–2017	60,000+139,910=199,910	5,296,270	13,860,900	3.774%
2018–2019	40,000+75,000=115,000	2,659,100	10,681,300	4.325%
2020–2021 (40C/5)	40,000+74,977=114,977	2,798,304	11,162,410	4.109%
2022–2023	26,970+50,570=77,540	2,152,185	11,218,153	3.603%
2024–2025	80,000+248,478=328,478	9,112,681	20,982, 814	3.605%
2026-2027 (43C/5)	53,175+185,161=238,336	6,041,537	18,389,398	3.945%

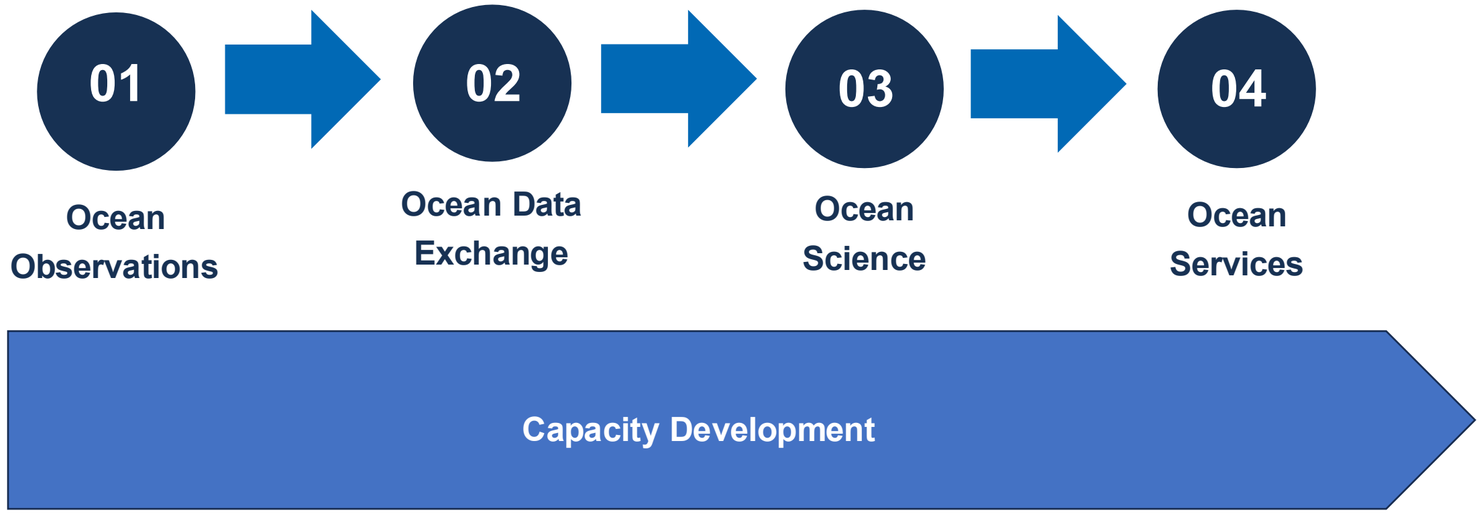
IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific

Demonstrated Comparative Strengths

01	**Responsiveness to Member States' needs**	Addressing evolving national priorities and emerging regional challenges
02	**Intergovernmental platform**	Convening Member States, building consensus and fostering trust
03	**Science-based, solutions-oriented partnerships and networks**	Connecting scientific expertise, institutions, policymakers and stakeholders
04	**Regional ownership and joint implementation**	Co-developing, co-implementing and jointly supporting initiatives
05	**Capacity development and knowledge sharing**	Strengthening national capabilities and facilitating knowledge and technology transfer
06	**Global-regional- national linkage**	Translating global priorities into regional cooperation and national action

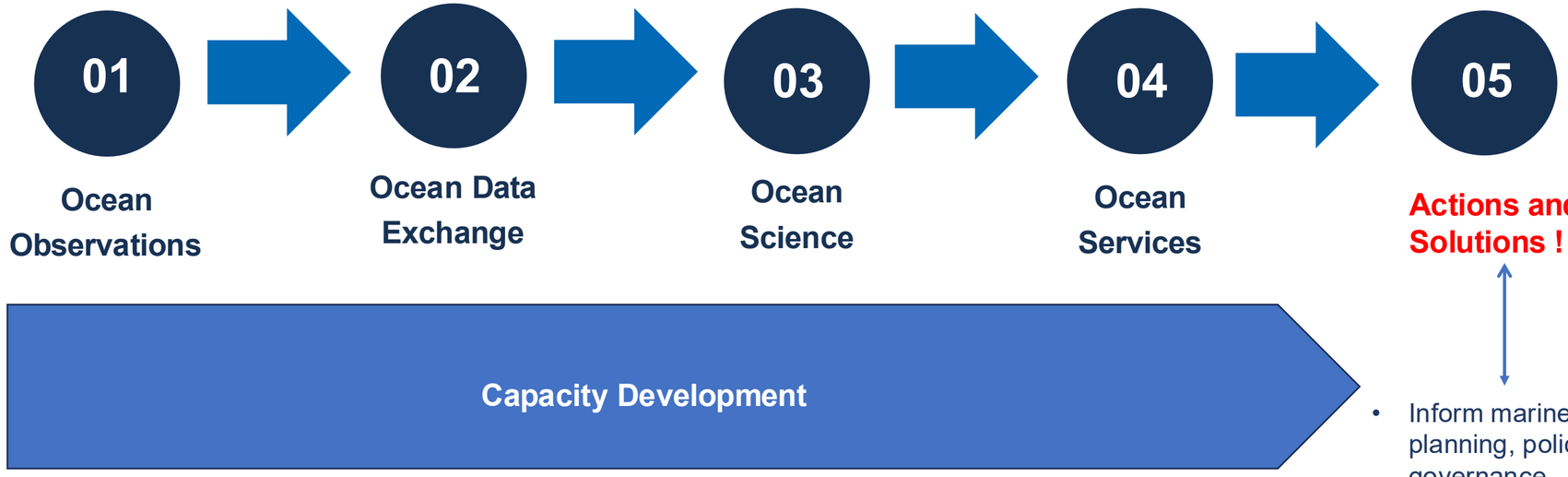
Driven by Member States' needs, powered by science and partnerships, and committed to collective action.

A collaboration platform for Member States, globally and regionally



>95% of output is **produced by Member State experts**, not by the Secretariat alone.

A collaboration platform for Member States, globally and regionally

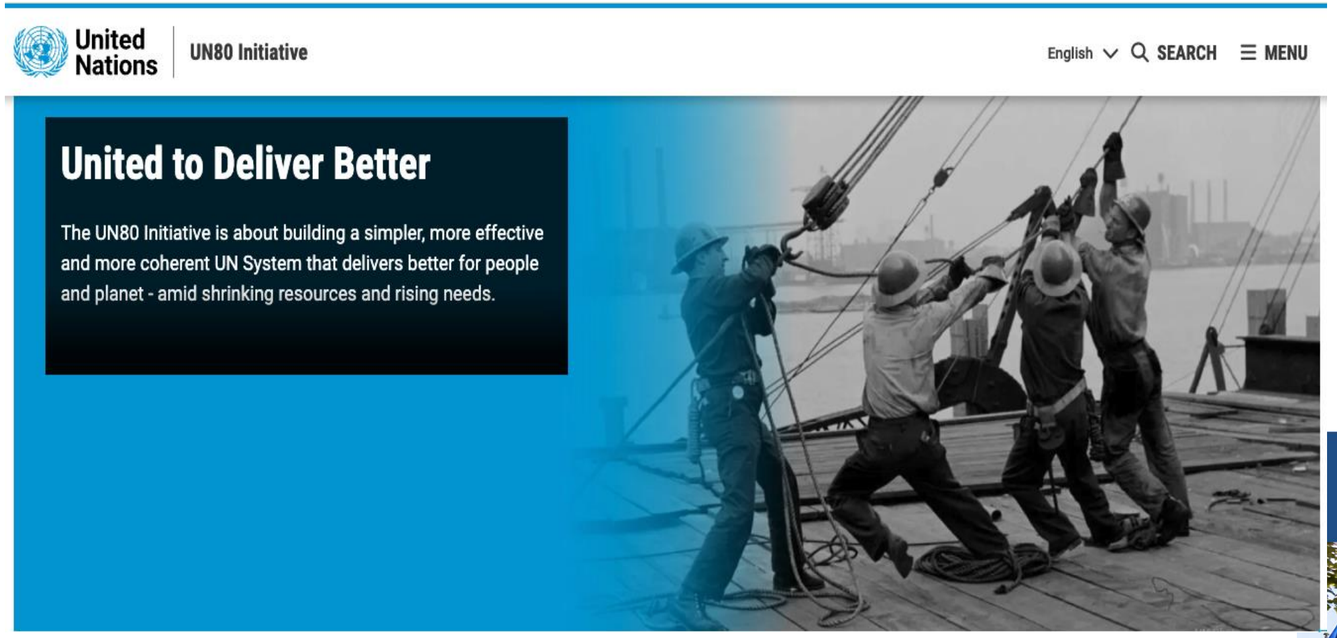


- Inform marine spatial planning, policy, governance, disaster risk reduction;
- Practical solutions for conservation, restoration, coastal resilience, and pollution;

>95% of output is **produced by Member State experts**, not by the Secretariat alone.

UN 80 & UNESCO 80

Bridging global priorities with regional needs and national actions



"The need is great"
"The goal is clear"
"Delivers for people"

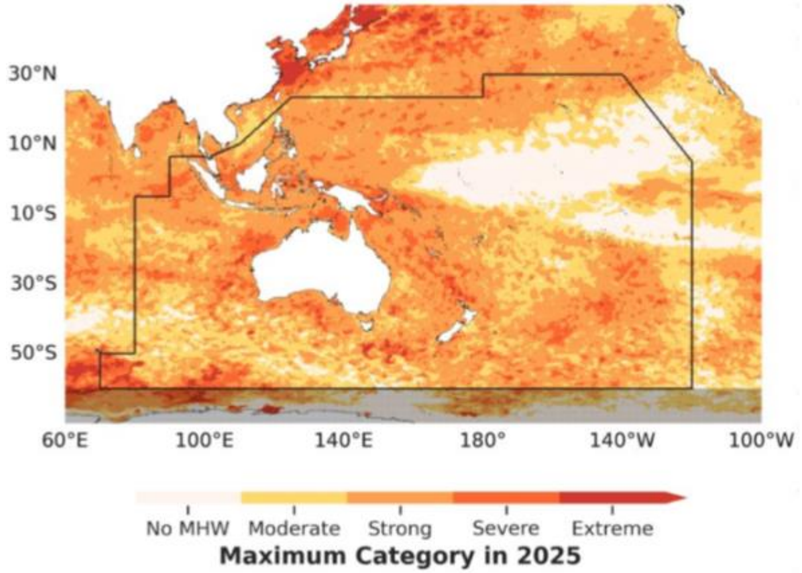


From Institutional Efficiency to Greater Strategic Relevance and Impact

Strengthening UNESCO's comparative advantages, organizational effectiveness, programme coherence and regional delivery to better serve Member States.

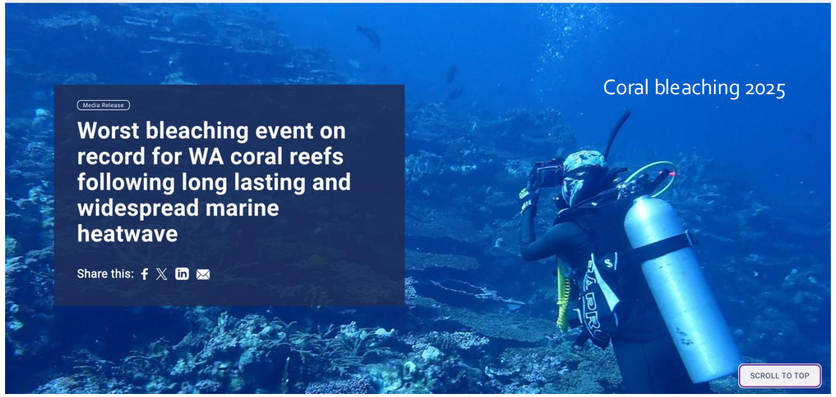
Key Ocean-Climate Events in the Western Pacific 2025-2026

Marine heatwaves, Extreme typhoons and cyclones, coral bleaching and ENSO











El Niño - South Oscillation (ENSO) 2025-2027

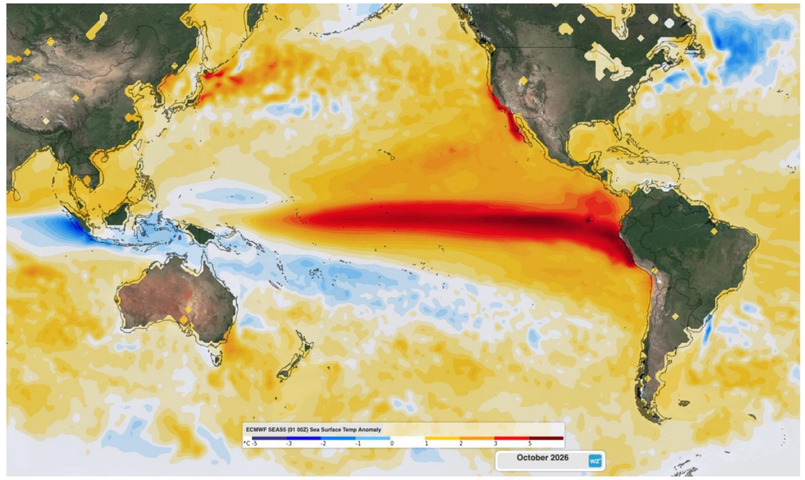
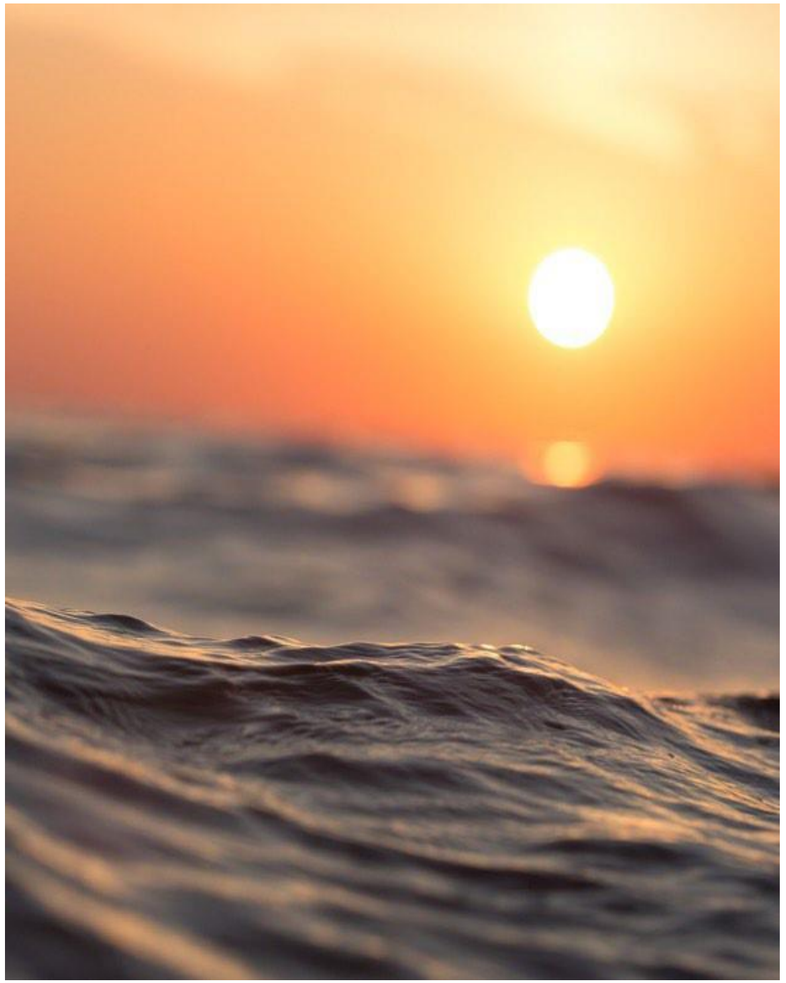


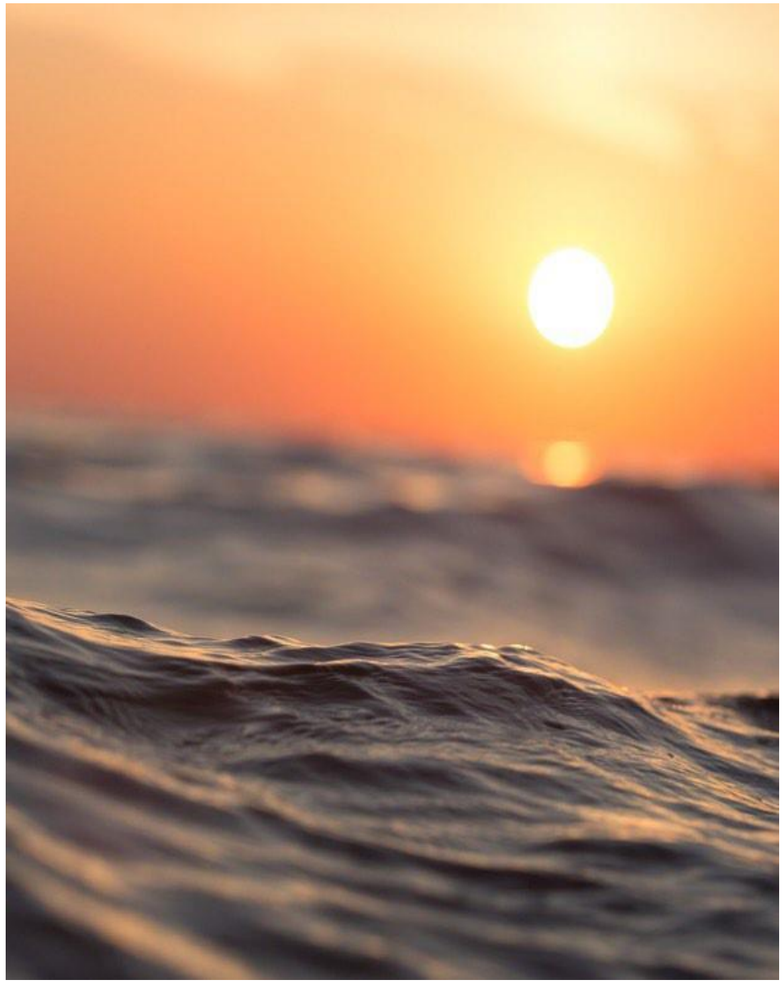
Image: Forecast sea surface temperature anomaly in October 2026, showing a distinctive El Niño pattern in the Pacific Ocean.

Critical institutional challenges

1. **Critical human resource constraints at the WESTPAC Office**, with only one core IOC professional post at the WESTPAC Office undertaking multiple tasks.
2. **MS' unequal capacity for international engagement** in IOC key policy discussions, strategic process, and program development.
3. **Continuously evolving ocean governance structure** at the national level, with uncertain or potentially adverse implications for the effectiveness of IOC national coordinating bodies and national engagement



Perspectives



- IOC's regional subsidiary bodies should not be viewed merely as implementation arms of global programmes, but as strategic mechanisms for shaping IOC's agenda from the bottom up, while translating its global scientific strengths into tangible regional and national benefits.

- Ongoing IOC consultation process will provide fresh momentum for addressing the role of IOC RSBs, and building a stronger, more effective IOC.

“From Knowledge to Action: Connecting Science, Policy, and Society for a Resilient Western Pacific”

