

# About the Joint Pledge to Ocean Accounts



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# Introduction

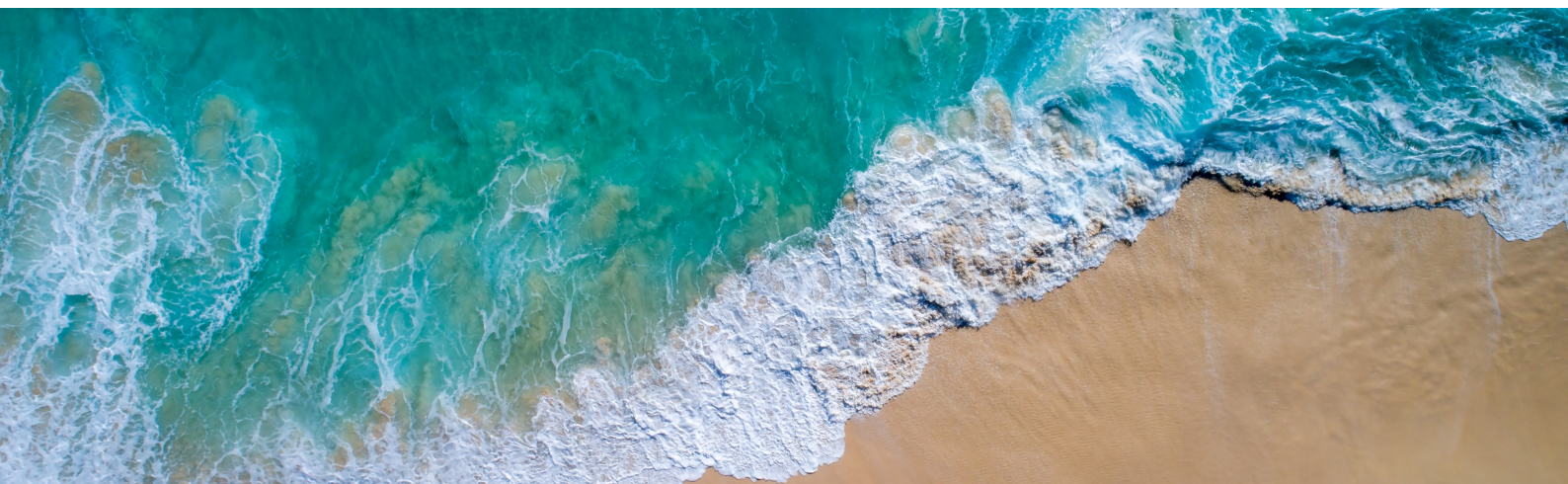
This document outlines the Pledge to Advance Ocean Accounts—a commitment led by Costa Rica as Co-Host of UNOC and supported by a growing coalition of countries and institutions. By joining, signatories signal their intent to incorporate ocean accounting into national decision-making, ensuring a structured approach to valuing marine ecosystems and advancing the sustainable ocean economy.

While the pledge itself provides the umbrella framework, countries and institutions can also choose to make additional voluntary commitments tailored to their priorities, such as developing national ocean accounts roadmaps or piloting new methodologies. These are entirely optional but offer a way to deepen engagement and demonstrate leadership.

This document covers the pledge in more detail, offering potential signatories a in-depth understanding of its relevance, how the submission process will work, and what will happen once it reaches UNOC. It further provides the reader with examples of wording for a voluntary commitment and/or country statement.

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# About the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC)

9-13 June 2025

The United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) is a leading international forum for advancing the conservation and sustainable use of ocean, seas, and marine resources to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14 "Life below Water"). It unites world leaders, scientists, policymakers, civil society organizations, and businesses to foster collaboration and generate commitments that further protects marine and coastal ecosystem, addresses marine pollution in all forms, promotes sustainable fisheries management and artisanal fisheries, as well as sustainable ocean-based economies, among others.

In 2025, the third UNOC (UNOC 3) will convene in Nice, France, where it will continue to build on past successes by driving innovative solutions and promoting stronger ocean governance. UNOC 3 is expected to deliver new voluntary commitments and partnerships aligning with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). UNOC3, with a focus on accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean, will be paramount to reverse the decline in ocean health and foster a sustainable ocean-based economy worldwide.

As Co-Chair of UNOC 3, Costa Rica will be championing the development and implementation of ocean accounts—a crucial step toward understanding and managing the value of ocean ecosystems. Ocean Accounts are a key feature of the UN Decade Programme for Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management and critical for fostering a sustainable and inclusive ocean-based economy.

Costa Rica is looking to invite like-minded countries to join a global movement towards ocean accounting. By committing to this effort through a pledge (the level of commitment is voluntary and can be defined by each state depending on national priorities), countries will create a powerful coalition to protect and sustainably use the ocean, ensuring that future generations benefit from healthy and resilient marine ecosystems.



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# The Pledge for Ocean Accounts



The *Joint Pledge for Ocean Accounts* (henceforth 'the Pledge') is a voluntary global commitment that advances the integration of ocean accounting into national and international governance frameworks. It reflects the growing recognition of ocean ecosystems as vital to human well-being, economic prosperity, and climate stability. This pledge promotes data-driven ocean management by embedding ocean accounts into decision-making frameworks.

This commitment aligns with key international frameworks, including [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) (SDG 14), and the [Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF) adopted under the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD). However, this pledge is about more than recognition—it unlocks tangible benefits that empower countries to transform ambition into action.

Costa Rica, as Co-Host of the [Third United Nations Ocean Conference](#) (UNOC 3) in Nice, France (9-13 June 2025), is leading this initiative, hoping to build international momentum for data-driven ocean management.

## Why join?

By joining the Pledge, participants:

- Position their country and/or institution at the forefront of global ocean governance, showcasing leadership in sustainable ocean management and data-driven policy-making.
- Signal strong demand for advancing ocean accounts, which helps create further opportunities for capacity-building initiatives, knowledge exchange, and partnerships with international financial institutions, donors, and technical experts.
- Align with global efforts and international commitments, including SDG 14, and the GBF.
- Unlock partnerships and financial support to accelerate ocean accounting initiatives.
- Unlock access to technical expertise and capacity-building opportunities to support implementation.
- Contribute to a global knowledge-sharing network, fostering collaboration across countries and institutions.
- Translate commitments into measurable impacts, supporting marine spatial planning, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable ocean-based economy development.
- Gain the tools, partnerships, and resources necessary to drive meaningful change for the ocean and future generations.

## How the Pledge works

The pledge is designed as an umbrella framework that accommodates the diverse priorities and capacities of each signatory. Countries and organizations can align their contributions with national priorities while collaborating on global goals for ocean sustainability. Signatories are encouraged to consider developing optional individual commitment statements that outline specific actions, measurable outcomes, and timelines aligned with their unique context. In the following pages, you will find examples of text for these statements under the pledge umbrella.

## Global impact

[Ocean accounts](#) provide a critical tool for understanding the value of ocean ecosystems by integrating environmental, economic, and social data. By joining the Pledge, countries demonstrate leadership in advancing ocean conservation through evidence-based decision-making. This commitment supports the development of policies that can protect marine ecosystems, promote sustainable resource use, and assess risks to ocean-dependent communities to strengthen adaptation and resilience to climate change.

The global coalition formed through this pledge fosters international collaboration, unlocking resources for countries that need technical and financial support. It establishes ocean accounting as a standard tool for sustainable ocean governance and decision-making, ensuring the health of marine ecosystems for future generations.

[Click here to see the Pledge to Advance Ocean Accounts](#)



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# How to join the Pledge for Ocean Accounts



## STEP 1: Sign the Pledge

The pledge will be officially open for signature during the [Ocean Accounts Exchange event](#) in San José, Costa Rica (24-27 March 2025) and will remain open for signature until early June 2025. Signing the pledge during this event is highly encouraged to build global momentum ahead of UNOC 3. There are two options for signing the Pledge:



### In-person

The Pledge must be signed by country-appointed delegates. Countries and organizations are encouraged to sign the pledge to demonstrate leadership and foster immediate momentum. A collective show of commitment will help catalyze further engagement, attracting the attention of other countries, funders and technical partners who can accelerate the implementation of ocean accounts for sustainable ocean development worldwide.

[Click here to see when to sign in-person](#)



### Online

If the organization wishes to join before UNOC or a high-level representative or representative cannot attend in-person, any of the events, signatories can send a written and/or video statement declaring their intention to sign and/or expressing their support.

[Click here to submit a statement online](#)

## STEP 2 (OPTIONAL): Submitting an individual statement

Besides signing the joint pledge, countries and organizations wishing to strengthen or tailor their commitment to their own specifications, are invited to follow one, or two, of the following options.

### 1. Individual statements to the Pledge

In addition to signing the Pledge, organizations are encouraged to submit an optional individual statement and commitment to ocean accounts, tailored to their national priorities. Individual commitments will be included as an annex to the joint Pledge and can also be officially submitted through the UNOC voluntary commitment portal.

The commitment could outline specific goals, planned actions, and timelines; and highlight how these align with international frameworks, such as SDG 14, and the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF),

[Click here to see example commitments](#)

### 2. Voluntary commitments at UNOC

For any country signing the Pledge and/or submitting their own statement, we highly recommend they also submit the joint pledge and/or their own statement as a [voluntary UNOC commitment](#) through the official UNOC page.

1. Access the [UNOC Voluntary Submission Portal](#)
2. Complete the submission form with details of your initiative or the joint pledge.
3. Await confirmation from the UN Secretariat indicating that your commitment is reviewed and accepted.

For more information visit the official UNOC page [here](#) and page 5 of this brief.



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# The Pledge for Ocean Accounts at UNOC 3

>10  
countries and  
organizations

Already signed  
and/or expressed  
their support to the  
pledge

## What happens next?

Costa Rica will formally announce the *Joint Pledge to Advance Ocean Accounts* on the main stage during UNOC 3. The Pledge reflects a shared ambition to strengthen global capabilities in ocean accounting, aligned with national priorities and aimed at achieving sustainable ocean management.

In addition to this major announcement, Costa Rica and Portugal, along multiple other countries working on advancing ocean accounts, are set to co-host a side event titled "Delivering on the 2030 Sustainable Ocean Economy: Pledge to Develop Ocean Accounts by 2030". This event is expected to take place within the Blue Zone at UNOC 3 and aims to launch the Pledge as a global movement with global partners and signatories. The event will feature perspectives from leading countries and highlight their efforts in implementing ocean accounts, fostering momentum for other stakeholders to join the coalition.

The UNOC 3 side event will serve as a platform to:

- **Celebrate a global initiative:** Offering a deep dive into the Pledge and attracting broader support from Member States, funding bodies, and key stakeholders.
- **Catalyze international momentum:** Showcasing the Pledge as a transformative, multi-stakeholder movement essential for achieving sustainable ocean development.
- **Share implementation strategies:** Countries leading the world in ocean accounting will highlight their progress, strategies and future ambitions.
- **Encourage global participation:** Inviting additional Member States, funders, and stakeholders to join this global effort.

We would be delighted if you would consider attending and participating in this side event. This is a unique opportunity to share your expertise, contribute to advancing ocean accounts globally, and connect with influential leaders and organizations during UNOC 3.

If you are interested in attending the side event, please contact the GOAP Secretariat by clicking the button below or emailing [info@oceanaccounts.org](mailto:info@oceanaccounts.org)

Click here to contact the  
GOAP Secretariat



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## Engaging at UNOC

There will be multiple opportunities to connect, collaborate and sign the pledge before and during UNOC

1

**Webinar on the Pledge (Virtual)** – On May 15th, a one-hour online session will offer an overview of the Pledge to Advance Ocean Accounts, highlight country experiences, and provide guidance on how to join. This is a key opportunity to engage ahead of UNOC 3 and learn how ocean accounts support climate action, marine planning, and sustainable finance. More information and registration details will follow shortly.

2

**UNOC Side Event (Blue Zone)** – On June 10th, 8:45–10:00 a.m., the high-level side event “Delivering on the 2030 Sustainable Ocean Economy: Pledge to Develop Ocean Accounts by 2030” (Event ID: ID27) will spotlight global efforts to scale up ocean accounting. Co-hosted by Portugal, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Maldives, Norway, the UK, OECD, the World Bank, and GOAP, the session will showcase country progress, launch new commitments, and strengthen international cooperation around the pledge.

3

**Costa Rica Pavilion Event (Green Zone)** – On the afternoon of June 10th, a 3-hour workshop will showcase the Pledge to Advance Ocean Accounts. Designed for a broad audience, the session will also introduce OA to newcomers, share technical insights, and showcase country experiences—including Costa Rica’s national roadmap. It will feature key themes such as economic dependency, social accounts, and MPA/conservation accounts to demonstrate the system’s impact. **This event offers one of the most accessible and timely opportunities to sign the Pledge to Advance Ocean Accounts, with on-site signing available throughout.** While political representation may be lower than in the Blue Zone, the event’s public-facing nature ensures **broad engagement**. A stand on Ocean Accounts will also be present in the Green Zone throughout UNOC.

For more general information about the pledge, click [here](#).



### Are you attending in UNOC 3?

If your organisation is attending UNOC 3 and interested to explore the pledge further, please let us know and the GOAP Secretariat is happy to coordinate a conversation to answer any further questions, provide support towards your commitment and explore new ideas —we’re here to help.



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# More information about UNOC voluntary commitments

The United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) provides a platform for countries and organizations to make voluntary commitments that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of ocean, seas, and marine resources.

By submitting a voluntary commitment to the UN Ocean Conference, you contribute to a global movement dedicated to preserving our ocean for current and future generations. Your proactive engagement is essential in turning the tide toward a sustainable and thriving marine environment.

## What are voluntary commitments?

Voluntary commitments are initiatives undertaken by governments, United Nations entities, intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society, academic and research institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and other stakeholders. These commitments aim to advance the implementation of SDG 14 by addressing its specific targets through concrete and measurable actions.

## Criteria for voluntary commitments

When formulating a voluntary commitment, consider the following criteria:

- **Specificity:** Clearly define the objective and scope of the commitment.
- **Measurability:** Establish indicators to track progress.
- **Achievability:** Ensure the commitment is realistic and attainable.
- **Resource-Based:** Identify the resources (financial, human, technical) allocated for implementation.
- **Time-Bound:** Set a clear timeline for achieving the commitment.

Additionally, commitments should respect United Nations principles and the existing legal framework for ocean, build upon or scale up successful efforts, and include means of implementation such as financing or capacity-building components to ensure sustainability.

## Monitoring and reporting

Transparency and accountability are crucial. Once your commitment is submitted as a UNOC voluntary commitment:

- You are encouraged to regularly submit progress reports to the UNOC platform detailing milestones achieved, challenges encountered, and lessons learned. These reports contribute to a collective understanding of global efforts toward achieving SDG 14 and are shared on the UN Ocean Conference platform.

- You can engage with the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) for technical support, capacity-building opportunities, fundraising and knowledge-sharing.
- Your commitment will contribute to a global database showcasing best practices and lessons learned, fostering collaboration and innovation in sustainable ocean management.

## Benefits of making a voluntary commitment

- **Global Recognition:** Showcase your organization's dedication to ocean sustainability on an international stage.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with a diverse group of stakeholders, fostering partnerships and collaborative efforts.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Attract potential funding and technical support by highlighting your commitment's impact and alignment with global goals.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Access a wealth of information and best practices from other commitment-makers, enhancing the effectiveness of your initiatives.

## Key considerations

- **Alignment with SDG 14:** Ensure your commitment directly contributes to one or more targets under SDG 14.
- **Inclusivity:** Engage multiple stakeholders, including marginalized and vulnerable communities, in both the development and implementation phases.
- **Innovation:** Incorporate innovative approaches and technologies to address ocean-related challenges effectively.
- **Sustainability:** Design your commitment with long-term impact in mind, ensuring benefits endure beyond the initial implementation period.





## Example commitments under the Pledge for Ocean Accounts and UNOC

The button below provides access to a document containing example country statements which countries may use for the *Joint Pledge for Ocean Accounts* and/or their optional country UNOC Voluntary Commitment. This is not an exhaustive or complete list and alterations should be made to match national circumstances and priorities.

Example commitments:

- Example 1. Signalling general support
- Example 2. General commitment to take action
- Example 3. Specific commitment to take action
- Example 4. Commitment to develop a roadmap for ocean accounts
- Example 5. Ocean policy or roadmap-focused commitment
- Example 6. Complete action-focused commitment

The Global Ocean Accounts Partnership Secretariat (GOAP) can support countries to develop their individual pledges in line with their national priorities. Please contact GOAP Secretariat co-Director [phil.james@unsw.edu.au](mailto:phil.james@unsw.edu.au) (copying [info@oceanaccounts.org](mailto:info@oceanaccounts.org)) for assistance.

[See the examples now](#)



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