

Commissioned by



HIGH LEVEL PANEL *for*
**A SUSTAINABLE
OCEAN ECONOMY**



100% SUSTAINABLE OCEAN MANAGEMENT

An Introduction to
Sustainable Ocean Plans

About the Ocean Panel

Established in 2018, the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel) is a unique initiative made up of serving world leaders who are building momentum for a sustainable ocean economy in which effective protection, sustainable production and equitable prosperity go hand in hand. By working collaboratively with a wide array of stakeholders, the Ocean Panel aims to identify bold solutions that bridge ocean health, wealth and equity and accelerate and scale responsive action worldwide.



About This Guide

This work has been commissioned by the Ocean Panel as a contribution to the headline commitment made in 2020 to sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction, guided by **Sustainable Ocean Plans**, by 2025, and in support of other ocean and coastal states joining the commitment to sustainably manage their areas under national jurisdictions by 2030. Note that countries joining the Ocean Panel effort after 2020 may commit to develop and be guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans within five years of joining, with the aim of sustainably managing 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction. The guide elaborates on the ‘who, what, when, where, why and how’ of Sustainable Ocean Plans. It also suggests initial steps for getting started on, or for accelerating, sustainable ocean planning. The guide is the result of consultation within the Ocean Panel and was prepared with experts from the Ocean Panel Expert Group and beyond, under coordination of the Ocean Panel Secretariat, based at World Resources Institute. A full list of the authors, experts and organisations that contributed to this guide is provided in the Acknowledgments section.

Foreword

In December 2020, the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel) released its *Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy: A Vision for Protection, Production and Prosperity*.

With this, the members of the Ocean Panel committed to sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area under their national jurisdictions, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans, by 2025.¹ They also urged all coastal and ocean states to join this commitment so that by 2030 all ocean areas under national jurisdiction are sustainably managed. In support of this headline commitment, the Ocean Panel subsequently commissioned this guide for the development and implementation of these plans.

This guide, *100% Sustainable Ocean Management: An Introduction to Sustainable Ocean Plans*, is the result of consultation within the Ocean Panel and with experts from the Ocean Panel Expert Group and beyond. While the starting points and national circumstances differ among countries, this guide is relevant for all countries. Importantly, sustainable ocean planning is not a one-off; any successful process needs to be continuous, ever evolving and adaptive to changing circumstances, challenges and opportunities. It is our hope and expectation that this guide will prove useful as a common reference for all parties involved in developing and implementing Sustainable Ocean Plans and that it will serve to stimulate the realisation of the 100% commitment.

We thank our fellow Ocean Panel members and their representatives and technical teams for their contributions to this process. We also give particular thanks to the international organisations and institutions with experience and expertise in related activities which have provided review comments and useful examples to shape this guide. We invite these actors to continue to play a key supporting role as the Ocean Panel drives the 100% approach forward domestically and internationally leading up to the United Nations Ocean Conference in 2022 and beyond.

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¹ Countries joining the Ocean Panel effort after 2020 may commit to develop and be guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans within five years of joining, with the aim of sustainably managing 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction.

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Executive Summary

In its *Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy* (*Transformations*) launched in December 2020, the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel) announced a shared vision for the sustainable development of the ocean—where effective protection, sustainable production and equitable prosperity go hand in hand. As part of this shared vision, the Ocean Panel made a headline commitment to sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area under their national jurisdictions, guided by **Sustainable Ocean Plans**, by 2025². Moreover, the Ocean Panel urged all coastal and ocean states to join them in this commitment so that by 2030 all ocean areas under national jurisdiction are sustainably managed.

A Sustainable Ocean Plan aims to guide public and private sector decision-makers on how to sustainably manage a nation's ocean area under national jurisdiction to advance long-term economic and social development—by protecting the natural marine ecosystems that underpin that development. It lays the foundation for implementing the Ocean Panel's *Transformations*, providing a unifying 'umbrella' for national ocean-related governance.

Developing and implementing Sustainable Ocean Plans can provide governments, citizens, businesses, coastal communities, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders with a range of economic, social and environmental benefits over time. For instance, effectively implemented plans can protect critical marine ecosystems, chart a course for economic and social development, provide regulatory and investment certainty and reduce the risk of conflict.

There are numerous ways for a country to develop an effective Sustainable Ocean Plan. Because ocean areas are not uniform in the benefits they provide and in the challenges they face, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Nonetheless, an effective plan should reflect nine attributes regarding process of development, content and ability to convert planning into impact. In terms of process, a Sustainable Ocean Plan is

inclusive, integrative and iterative in its engagement of stakeholders and use of knowledge. In terms of content, it is place-based, ecosystem-based and knowledge-based. In terms of impact, it is endorsed, financed and capacitated to ensure implementation. Useful components of an effective Sustainable Ocean Plan include spatial plans, economic development strategies, environmental protection approaches, social considerations, ocean statistical accounts, enabling policies and finance. While the destination—a sustainable ocean economy—may be shared, the ports of departure and courses charted may differ across countries. Getting started right away, with a view to ongoing iteration and improvement, is more important than getting planning perfect the first time.

To ensure ownership and commitment, national governments should integrate the development and implementation of Sustainable Ocean Plans into domestic budgetary processes to ensure domestic budget allocation in the long term. Supplementary funding for countries that need it can come from grants, loans, official development assistance, blended finance (e.g. planning grants integrated into economic development loans) and novel financing approaches.

Monitoring progress on Sustainable Ocean Plan development and implementation is critical if planning is to lead to positive outcomes. This guide provides a simple checklist to help countries ensure their planning processes are not merely a continuation of 'business as usual' but rather an enhanced ambition commensurate with the *Transformations*. A number of countries around the world are developing components of Sustainable Ocean Plans. However, too few have embarked on the journey, and many existing planning processes miss important attributes or components. Thus, developing robust, effective Sustainable Ocean Plans is urgently needed. With less than a decade to go to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, there is no time to waste.

² Countries joining the Ocean Panel effort after 2020 may commit to develop and be guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans within five years of joining, with the aim of sustainably managing 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction.

1. Introduction

In December 2020, the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy (Ocean Panel) announced a shared vision for the sustainable development of the ocean—one in which effective protection, sustainable production and equitable prosperity go hand in hand. Built upon a solid foundation of knowledge, the Ocean Panel's *Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy: A Vision for Protection, Production and Prosperity (Transformations)* sets out a new ocean action agenda for the decade (Box 1). It identifies bold yet pragmatic actions to be taken across five critical areas—ocean health, ocean wealth, ocean equity, ocean knowledge and ocean finance—to transform humanity's relationship with (and impacts upon) the ocean and ensure that the myriad benefits and opportunities that the ocean provides can be sustainably enjoyed by all.

As the 'headline' of these *Transformations*, the Ocean Panel committed to sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area under their national jurisdictions, guided by **Sustainable Ocean Plans**, by 2025³. In addition, the Ocean Panel urged all coastal and ocean states to join them in this commitment so that by 2030 all ocean areas under national jurisdiction are sustainably managed.

A Sustainable Ocean Plan provides a unifying 'umbrella' for ocean-related governance. As outlined in *Transformations*, a Sustainable Ocean Plan

... describes policies and mechanisms to facilitate sustainable use of the ocean and maximise benefits and value creation for current and future generations. It provides a framework to reconcile conflicting uses of the ocean and its resources and enable long-term sustainable growth in the ocean economy. It can include a range of mechanisms such as regulatory reform, strategic investments in emerging sectors, marine spatial planning, integrated coastal and watershed management, and the establishment and implementation

of marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures that can help deliver nature's contributions to people, economic and positive biodiversity conservation outcomes, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and sustainable fish stocks.

Sustainable Ocean Plans should be in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, build on integrated ocean management and ecosystem knowledge, address pressures from all land- and sea-based sources, and take account of the predicted impacts of climate change. As the foundation for a sustainable ocean economy, these plans should be developed and implemented through an inclusive, participatory, transparent and accountable process.

This guide elaborates on Sustainable Ocean Plans by answering the following questions:

- Why develop a Sustainable Ocean Plan?
- What are the attributes and useful components of a Sustainable Ocean Plan?
- How does one follow progress on sustainable ocean planning?
- How does a country finance sustainable ocean planning?
- What are some examples of sustainable ocean planning?
- What are some suggested next steps?

Where relevant, this guide points readers to available resources and tools.

³ Countries joining the Ocean Panel effort after 2020 may commit to develop and be guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans within five years of joining, with the aim of sustainably managing 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction.

Box 1. 2030 Outcomes of the Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy

If successfully implemented, the new ocean action agenda set forth by the *Transformations*^a will result in the following outcomes by 2030:

A 100% APPROACH

Sustainable Ocean Plans are providing a credible basis for safeguarding the long-term health and resilience of the ocean, attracting investment and creating jobs to the benefit of coastal communities and national economies.

OCEAN WEALTH

Sustainable Ocean Food: Wild fish stocks are restored and harvested at sustainable levels, aquaculture is sustainably grown to meet global needs, and waste is minimised and managed throughout the value chain.

Sustainable Ocean Energy: Ocean-based renewable energy is fast-growing and on the path to becoming a leading source of energy for the world.

Sustainable Ocean-Based Tourism: Coastal and ocean-based tourism is sustainable, resilient, addresses climate change, reduces pollution, supports ecosystem regeneration and biodiversity conservation and invests in local jobs and communities.

Sustainable Ocean Transport: Shipping investments have effectively accelerated the shift towards zero-emission and low-impact marine vessels.

Sustainable New Ocean Industries: Innovation and investments in new ocean industries have boosted environmentally responsible and inclusive economic growth.

A Precautionary Approach to Seabed Mining: Sufficient knowledge and regulations are in place to ensure that any activity related to seabed mining is informed by science and ecologically sustainable.

OCEAN HEALTH

Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Ambitious climate action has set the world on track to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and restore ocean health.

Protect and Restore Marine and Coastal Ecosystems: Marine and coastal ecosystems are healthy, resilient and productive, and nature-based solutions are key elements in developing coastal infrastructure.

Reduce Ocean Pollution: The ocean is no longer a sink for pollution and ocean dead zones are minimised.

OCEAN EQUITY

Promote Equal Opportunity for People to Benefit from the Ocean: People have equitable access to ocean resources, benefits are fairly distributed and the most vulnerable are protected from the risk of harm.

OCEAN KNOWLEDGE

Build Ocean Literacy and Skills: Through the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science ocean literacy has been enhanced worldwide. People understand the value of the ocean and have acquired the skills and knowledge to participate in the sustainable ocean economy.

Account for the Value of the Ocean: Decision-making affecting the ocean reflects the value of and impacts on the ocean's natural capital.

Harness Ocean Science, Technology and Data: A globally shared data revolution has contributed to sustainable ocean management worldwide.

OCEAN FINANCE

Ocean Finance: Sustainable ocean finance is accessible for all and drives ecologically sustainable and socially equitable economic growth.

^a See *Ocean Panel (2020)*.

2. Why Develop a Sustainable Ocean Plan?

To sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction and to realise the *Transformations*, countries need to develop and implement a Sustainable Ocean Plan. Doing so can provide governments, citizens, businesses, coastal communities, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders with a range of economic, social and environmental benefits over time:

Economic benefits

- Sustained, stable, long-term economic development and job creation
- Clear roadmaps for operationalising the sustainable Blue Economy
- Greater regulatory certainty, reduced risks and lower-cost permitting for ocean uses
- A more attractive, secure and stable public and private sector investment environment
- More secure supply chains due to reduced overfishing and damage from resource extraction
- Reduced climate change impacts on economic development, lower risks to property and infrastructure, and greater economic opportunities via climate change adaptation

Social benefits

- Improved and equitable livelihoods, income-generating opportunities and human well-being—especially for coastal communities and Indigenous Peoples
- Enhanced food and nutrition security
- Improved health from clean air, clean water, clean beaches, safe seafood and opportunities to spend time in nature
- Sustained opportunities for recreation, education, exploration and inspiration, as well as acquisition of knowledge and practical skills (e.g. fishing, swimming, navigation)

- Improved stewardship of ocean-related social and spiritual values, including cultural heritage practices and areas

Environmental benefits

- Enhanced climate change mitigation (e.g. via carbon sequestration by mangroves, seagrass meadows and tidal marshes)
- Improved resilience and adaptation to climate change
- Increased conservation of critical ecosystems and species
- Greater restoration of natural ecosystems and their productivity and biomass
- Reduced ocean pollution (e.g. plastics, effluents, runoff)

In addition, a well-designed and effectively implemented Sustainable Ocean Plan will improve **coastal and ocean governance**. For instance, it increases opportunities for meaningful community, stakeholder and citizen engagement and power-sharing by building robust participation mechanisms. It promotes making decisions in a more efficient and consistent way by improving coordination among government agencies, and with the private sector. It enables more efficient use of ocean space and sustainable use of living marine resources, thereby averting potential competition and avoiding conflict. In addition, it facilitates comprehensive impact assessments of potential new activities (versus the current project-by-project or sector-by-sector assessment approach).

The most relevant benefits will vary across countries and cultures. Regardless, a greater number of benefits are more likely to be achieved the more comprehensive the plan is, and the more that societal goals are defined and committed to upfront.

3. What Are the Attributes and Useful Components of a Sustainable Ocean Plan?

A Sustainable Ocean Plan is a foundation for implementing the *Transformations*. It aims to provide for the long-term health of ocean ecosystems as an underpinning for thriving economies and societies.

3.1 Attributes

Although there are numerous ways for a country to develop one, a Sustainable Ocean Plan should reflect nine attributes covering process, content and impact to be effective (Figure 1). While reflecting each of these nine attributes to at least some degree is important, how comprehensive and deep the plan is on each of them can improve over time—recognising that countries have disparate starting conditions and resources.

In terms of **process**, a Sustainable Ocean Plan is inclusive, integrative and iterative:

- **Inclusive.** It is developed and implemented through a participatory, transparent, equitable and accountable process that ensures all relevant interests are heard and addressed at an early stage. The process includes representatives from relevant government agencies, economic sectors, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, research institutions and other stakeholders (see Box 2 for more).
- **Integrative.** It establishes cross-sectoral and cross-administrative coordination mechanisms that bring together relevant authorities with sectoral responsibilities on ocean management—breaking down proverbial management and data silos among ministries (e.g. fisheries, commerce, environment, transport, finance, statistics) and scales (e.g. national, state, local, tribal). It combines sustainable use by ocean sectors (e.g. ports, fisheries, energy, tourism, shipping) with effective protection of marine

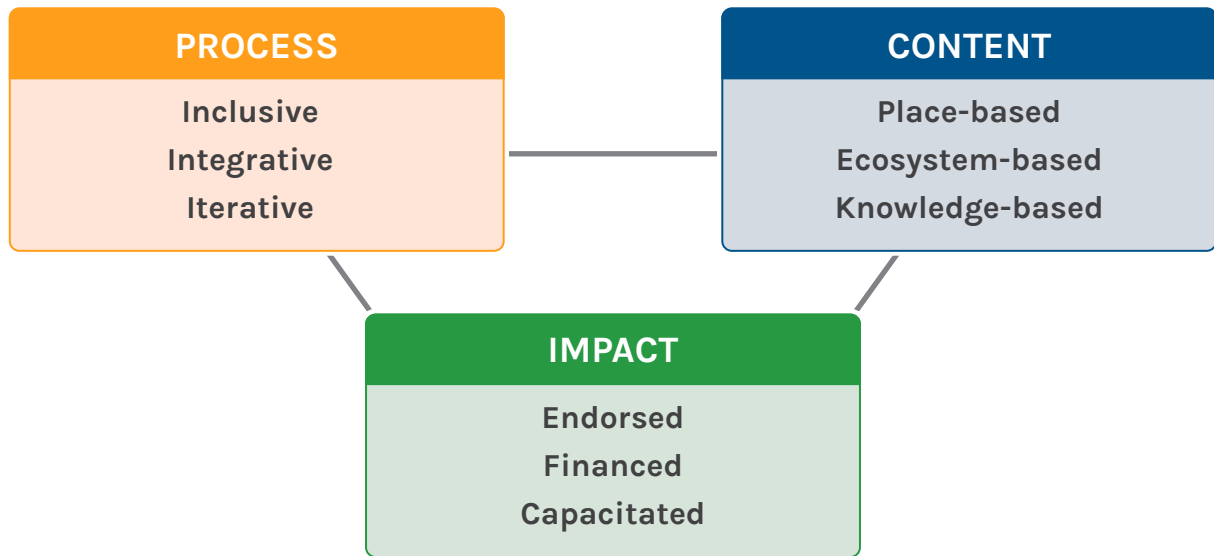
ecosystems in a holistic manner. In addition, it links various plans, processes and data that a country may already have (or will develop) into a coherent whole.

- **Iterative.** It is ‘living’—it works for today yet anticipates the changes of tomorrow. It establishes a defined timeframe and process for periodic, transparent monitoring and evaluation to check progress against agreed-upon goals and indicators of implementation. It gets updated and refined in light of results, new knowledge, new stakeholder input and changing conditions (Box 2). Through such iterations, imperfect early Sustainable Ocean Plans can improve over time.

In terms of **content**, a Sustainable Ocean Plan is place-based, ecosystem-based and knowledge-based:

- **Place-based.** It encompasses all marine and coastal areas under national jurisdiction. These areas could be captured in one single plan or via a suite of plans (e.g. one per type of marine ecosystem within the national jurisdiction). A plan covers the surface, water column and seabed of the defined area. In addition, effective plans consider the linkages among the national marine/coastal jurisdiction and adjacent land and river basins (including watersheds). For some countries, major impacts from neighbouring waters or from areas beyond national jurisdiction may be important to consider.
- **Ecosystem-based.** It is grounded in an ecosystem approach or ecosystem-based management—‘the management of natural resources focusing on the health, productivity, and resilience of a specific ecosystem, group of ecosystems, or selected natural assets as the nucleus of management. It recognises the full array of interactions within an ecosystem,

Figure 1. Attributes of Sustainable Ocean Plans



including with humans’ (Winther et al. 2020). It acknowledges that to maintain healthy, resilient and functioning ecosystems, ocean areas need to be protected from unsustainable use. It also integrates the needs of human communities that rely on marine ecosystems for food security and livelihoods and it underpins nature-based climate solutions.

- **Knowledge-based.** It is underpinned by the best available science and knowledge, including Indigenous and local knowledge, creating a shared and publicly available knowledge foundation (except for security-sensitive data). Among other things, this knowledge covers current and planned economic activities, social conditions and dynamics, the current and anticipated future state of the marine environment as well as cumulative impacts of land-based activities and climate change projections. The plan is also clear about what is not currently known and reflects a precautionary approach.

In terms of translating planning into **impact**, a Sustainable Ocean Plan is endorsed, financed and capacitated:

- **Endorsed.** It is officially endorsed or politically supported at the highest level within a country (e.g. president, prime minister, cabinet, parliament) and

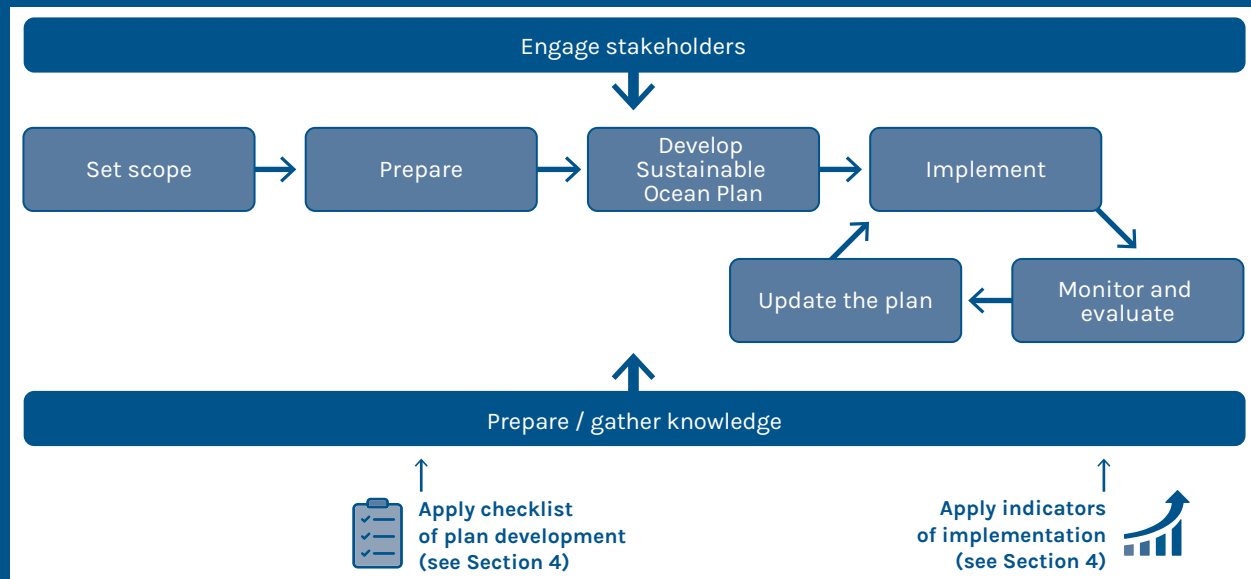
at relevant sub-national levels (including leadership from Indigenous Peoples where relevant). This endorsement should translate into institutional support within government agencies for the ongoing development, refinement and implementation of the Sustainable Ocean Plan. This creates legitimacy, catalyses sufficient high-level attention and grounds steadfast implementation over the long term.

- **Financed.** It is accompanied by sufficient long-term financial resources for development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and improvement. This funding should come from domestic resources (where feasible) and can be supplemented by funding from development banks, official development assistance (ODA), philanthropies and other sources (see Section 5 for more).
- **Capacitated.** It includes measures to ensure sufficient institutional capacity (e.g. skills and knowledge in relevant agencies) for developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and improving the plan. Where capacity is insufficient, the plan should provide for long-term institutional support for relevant capacity building.

Box 2. The Iterative Process for Developing and Updating a Sustainable Ocean Plan

Developing and implementing a Sustainable Ocean Plan is an iterative process that includes the following generic steps (Figure B2.1). Specific steps may vary across countries, reflecting different starting points and needs.

Figure B2.1. Iterative Process for Developing a Sustainable Ocean Plan



▪ **Set scope**

- *Articulate vision.* Along with stakeholders, discuss and agree on a vision for the country’s sustainable ocean economy—predicated on effective protection, sustainable production and equitable prosperity—and time-bound goals and priorities.
- *Define area.* Select the geospatial boundaries to be covered by the plan (including a delineation of the ecosystems to be covered). A single plan could address the entire area under national jurisdiction, or an integrated set of sub-jurisdiction plans could do the same.

▪ **Prepare**

- *Establish coordination mechanisms.* Create cross-sectoral, cross-stakeholder coordination mechanisms that bring together relevant government authorities, ocean economic sector representatives, scientists, ocean-related non-governmental organisations and

local communities. It is good practice for the mechanism to bring under its ‘umbrella’ ocean-related processes already underway within the country.

- *Assess current knowledge, plans and processes.* Find and bring together existing ocean-related plans and processes in the country (e.g. marine spatial planning, integrated coastal zone management, sustainable Blue Economy planning, national tourism plan). Compare against the nine attributes and the useful components of Sustainable Ocean Plans to identify what is already in place and where there are gaps to be filled.
- **Develop Sustainable Ocean Plan.** Conduct an inclusive and integrative process to develop the plan. Ensure the plan reflects all nine attributes of Sustainable Ocean Plans and includes the appropriate useful components (see Section 3.2). In addition, ensure the plan includes specific goals, indicators and means of monitoring over time.

Box 2. The Iterative Process for Developing and Updating a Sustainable Ocean Plan (Cont.)

- **Implement.** Pursue the measures (e.g. government policies, business practices, financing investments) needed to implement the Sustainable Ocean Plan over time.
- **Monitor and evaluate.** Periodically monitor and assess implementation progress against the plan's indicators.
- **Update the plan.** Periodically update portions or all of the plan as implementation unfolds; economic, social and/or environmental conditions evolve; and/or the state of knowledge improves. How often the plan gets updated and how resources get allocated may change over time.

Two activities to pursue continuously during the entire process of developing and implementing a Sustainable Ocean Plan are the following:

- **Prepare/gather knowledge.** Assemble, evaluate and structure existing knowledge, data and information on relevant social, economic and environmental factors

(current and anticipated) to inform the planning process. Conduct/commission new research where there are gaps. Leverage ocean accounts where possible. During plan implementation, keep abreast of the latest social, economic and environmental knowledge and feed it into plan revision processes.

- **Engage stakeholders.** Conduct a thorough identification of which stakeholders to involve, and when and how they should be engaged in plan development and implementation. Stakeholders in ocean planning tend to include representatives from relevant government ministries, ocean industry sectors, financiers, research institutions, non-governmental organisations, local communities and Indigenous Peoples. Ensuring stakeholders represent a balance of social, cultural, economic and ecological interests—and are engaged at an early stage—can circumvent later conflicts and grievances and build legitimacy and buy-in for the plan.

3.2 Useful Components

As a foundation for achieving the *Transformations*, a Sustainable Ocean Plan is a unifying framework that brings together existing and new ocean-related plans, processes and policies into a coherent, integrated whole. For instance, it can ensure ocean sector development strategies are integrated with marine spatial plans (see Glossary for relevant definitions). In turn, it can ensure that enabling policies and finance support these sustainable ocean economic development strategies.

Although there is no one-size-fits-all design, useful components of an effective Sustainable Ocean Plan include the following (Figure 2):

- **Area-based plans** that delineate and/or prioritise where various human activities are compatible, appropriate and/or allowed to occur in marine areas to improve management of economic activities, avoid spatial conflicts, provide regulatory certainty and protect ecosystems and habitats (e.g. marine spatial plans, marine protected areas). The resulting maps provide the geospatial foundation upon which other components can be anchored.
- **Social and cultural considerations** that ensure people benefit from effective ocean protection and sustainable production in a manner that results in equitable prosperity. Considerations include, but are not limited to, participation in planning and management processes, access to and benefits from marine resources, equitable roles for Indigenous Peoples and local coastal communities and the protection of the most vulnerable from the risk of harm. These considerations address growing attention to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice issues.
- **Economic development strategies** that articulate how existing ocean economy sectors (e.g. energy, fisheries, mariculture, shipping, tourism) should develop and evolve to realise the *Transformations*, and which consider the compatibility of emerging ocean activities. These strategies provide businesses, investors, governments, and communities and Indigenous Peoples with clear guidance for sustainable economic planning and implementation.

Figure 2. Useful Components of a Sustainable Ocean Plan



- **Environmental protection approaches** designed to avoid or reduce pollution from both land- and sea-based sources, avoid or mitigate negative impacts of land-based activities on coastal and marine areas, conserve and restore marine ecosystems (including marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures), mitigate climate change, increase resiliency to climate change (e.g. disaster-risk reduction, vulnerability reduction) and achieve other environmental goals.
- **Ocean accounts** that track, standardise and report relevant social, economic and natural capital data regarding a country’s ocean area and ocean economy—as an integral part of national accounting. This statistical information enables decision-makers to measure progress towards equitable economic development and monitor the state of the natural marine assets that underpin that development.
- **Enabling policies** that support the transition to a sustainable ocean economy, including national and sub-national laws, regulations, institutional and governance reforms, industrial policies, monitoring and enforcement, and more.
- **Enabling finance** to invest in the transition to a sustainable ocean economy, including commercial investment, development assistance, market incentives and fiscal policies (e.g. taxes, fees, bonds, beneficial subsidies, public expenditures).

A Sustainable Ocean Plan provides a concise integrated summary, interlinks the components in one place and directs audiences where to find more detail on the components. The content of a plan will vary across countries (and sub-national jurisdictions in some countries) according to national circumstances and needs. While some countries may be just beginning the process, others can develop their Sustainable Ocean Plan by reviewing, building upon and enhancing existing sectoral and area-based plans, processes, frameworks and policies—filling in gaps, expanding scope, improving integration and increasing ambition.

Multiple guides and frameworks exist to support a country in developing the components of a Sustainable Ocean Plan (see Appendix A).

4. How Does One Follow Progress on Sustainable Ocean Planning?

Meeting the Ocean Panel’s headline commitment involves both *developing* a Sustainable Ocean Plan and *implementing* it. Following progress on both calls for distinct approaches—a checklist for plan development and indicators of implementation—since they reflect different stages of the planning process (see Figure B2.1).

4.1 A Checklist for Plan Development

As articulated in Section 3, an effective Sustainable Ocean Plan should reflect nine attributes. Accordingly, one approach for following progress on plan development consists of identifying whether or not these attributes are in place. To this end, Table 1 provides a checklist of these attributes that can serve as a helpful reminder to individual countries during plan preparation processes. This checklist can ensure plans are not merely a continuation of business as usual but rather an enhanced ambition commensurate with the *Transformations*. Although this checklist does not guarantee plan implementation, it can help get the planning process started (or enhance it).

4.2 Indicators of Implementation

Coastal and ocean states (individually and collectively) would benefit from a mechanism to follow progress on plan implementation and on ultimate achievement of the ‘headline commitment’ (i.e. sustainably managing 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction). A robust approach to monitoring individual country plan implementation should be an integrated part of a Sustainable Ocean Plan itself, in line with the goals agreed to in each country context. Such indicators of implementation can help identify where plan

implementation is leading to impact and where implementation needs more attention, iteration and improvement over time.

Implementation indicators to relay collective progress (for the sake of understanding the net impact) can support countries acting in good faith by identifying areas of progress and achievement, as well as areas where more progress is needed. Such collective indicators could help guide international technical capacity-building and financial support. Where possible, existing indicators (e.g. those already reported on within international agreements) should be used, thus reducing the need to invent anything new. Identifying and agreeing upon the appropriate set of implementation indicators is an important next step that goes beyond the scope of this guide. Appendix B outlines some candidate indicators. As far as possible, mechanisms for relaying progress should be simple, leader-worthy and non-burdensome.

Table 1. Checklist for Sustainable Ocean Planning

	ATTRIBUTE	CHECKLIST	EXPLANATION
Process	Inclusive	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the plan's development process inclusive?	The plan should be developed and implemented through a participatory, transparent, equitable and accountable process that ensures all relevant interests are heard and addressed at an early stage. The process should include all relevant stakeholders.
	Integrative	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the plan integrate government agencies, sectors and processes?	The plan should establish cross-sectoral and cross-administrative coordination mechanisms that bring together relevant authorities with sectoral responsibilities on ocean management—breaking down proverbial management and data silos among ministries (e.g. fisheries, environment, commerce, transport, finance, statistics) and scales (e.g. national, state, local, tribal). It should combine sustainable use by ocean sectors (e.g. ports, fisheries, energy, tourism, shipping) with effective protection of marine ecosystems in a holistic manner. In addition, it should link various ocean-related plans, processes and data that a country may already have (or is developing) into a coherent whole.
	Iterative	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the plan's process iterative?	The plan should be a 'living' document—working today yet anticipating the changes of tomorrow. It should establish a defined timeframe and process for periodic, transparent monitoring and evaluation to check progress against agreed-upon goals and indicators of implementation. It should be refined in light of results, new knowledge, new stakeholder input and changing conditions.
Content	Place-based	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the plan address the entire marine/ocean area under national jurisdiction?	The plan should encompass all marine and coastal areas under national jurisdiction (captured in one single plan or a suite of plans); include the surface, water column and seabed; and consider the linkages among the national marine jurisdiction and adjacent land and river basins (including watersheds). If relevant, linkages among national and neighbouring waters, and with areas beyond national jurisdiction, also may be considered.
	Ecosystem-based	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the plan grounded in an ecosystem-based approach?	The plan should be grounded in an ecosystem approach or ecosystem-based management, namely, the management of natural resources focusing on the health, productivity and resilience of a specific ecosystem, group of ecosystems or selected natural assets as the nucleus of management—recognising the full array of interactions within an ecosystem, including with people. It acknowledges that to maintain healthy, resilient and functioning ecosystems, ocean areas need to be protected from unsustainable use. It also integrates the needs of human communities that rely on marine ecosystems for food security and livelihoods and it underpins nature-based climate solutions.
	Knowledge-based	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the plan underpinned by knowledge and evidence?	The plan should be underpinned by the best available science and knowledge, including Indigenous and local knowledge, creating a shared and publicly available (except for security-sensitive items) knowledge foundation. Knowledge should cover current and planned economic activities, social conditions and dynamics, the current and anticipated future state of the marine environment in the plan's area—including cumulative impacts on the marine environment of human activities, land-based activities and projected climate change.
Impact	Endorsed	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there national political support for a Sustainable Ocean Plan?	The plan and planning process should be officially endorsed or politically supported by the national government at the highest levels (e.g. president, prime minister, cabinet, parliament). Where relevant, it should be endorsed by relevant subnational levels, including leadership from Indigenous Peoples.
	Financed	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there sufficient financing for sustainable ocean planning?	The plan should have sufficient long-term financial resources for its development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and improvement. This funding should come from domestic resources (where feasible) and can be supplemented by funding from development banks, official development assistance, philanthropies and other sources.
	Capacitated	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there sufficient human capacity for the plan?	The plan should include measures to ensure sufficient institutional capacity (e.g. skills and knowledge in relevant agencies) for development, implementation, monitoring and periodic evaluation and improvement.

5. How Does a Country Finance Sustainable Ocean Planning?

Meeting the ambitious commitment to sustainably manage 100% of national waters will require dedicated financing for both the development and implementation of Sustainable Ocean Plans. This is inherently a domestic government responsibility, requiring appropriate mandates and budgetary allocations. Support from domestic government budgets can be in the form of cash allocations to finance planning processes, analyses and implementation. It can also be in the form of paying for professional government staff to work on sustainable ocean planning processes. Securing domestic government budget allocations for at least a portion (varying by country ability) of the total cost of preparing and implementing Sustainable Ocean Plans is important because it helps ensure that the plan is ‘owned’ by the government; it also sends a signal of commitment to other sources of funding.

A range of additional revenue sources exists to supplement Sustainable Ocean Plan financing beyond existing domestic budgets. Among others, these include ocean-use fees, loans, philanthropic grants, official development assistance and, in specific contexts, blue bonds and debt conversion.

Ocean-use fees

Government agencies can collect fees from ocean-based tourism, energy leases, fisheries, transportation, or other sources that go into a fund to finance sustainable ocean planning and implementation. China’s marine spatial planning legislation, for example, established a user-fee system which requires any entity utilising ocean resources to pay a fee. While 70 percent of fees collected are returned to relevant provincial governments, 30 percent go directly to the state for use towards marine development, protection and management (Li 2006).

Loans

A government can take a loan from a financial institution to support the development and implementation of a Sustainable Ocean Plan. Payments on the interest and capital could be financed from tax revenues, fees on ocean-related activities or other sources. For example, the European Investment Bank’s Blue Sustainable Ocean Strategy seeks to provide long-term loans and other types of financing for governments, local authorities and the private sector with a view to improve the health of the ocean, build stronger coastal environments and boost sustainable ocean economic activities (UNEP FI 2021a). The Inter-American Development Bank is supporting the Government of the Bahamas in strengthening its institutional capacities for the development and implementation of policy measures and financial mechanisms to promote a sustainable ocean economy and better management of marine resources, under the modality of Programmatic Policy-Based Loans, technical assistance and policy-based guarantees (IDB 2020).

Philanthropic grants

Grants are available from a number of philanthropic foundations, charities and high-net-worth individuals to fund components of Sustainable Ocean Plans. In the United States, for instance, private foundations have provided more than half the cost of marine spatial planning efforts at the national and state levels. The Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast is financed predominately through private foundations (MSPG 2019a). Since 2009, philanthropy has contributed an estimated \$8.3 billion to sustainable ocean initiatives, of which a portion has been for planning (de Vos and Hart 2020).

Development assistance

Although less than 1 percent of official development assistance goes to sustainable ocean efforts (OECD 2020), some national governments and multilateral development banks have made grant-based funding available to support eligible countries in developing and pursuing aspects of sustainable ocean planning. For example, the United Kingdom (UK) is establishing a £500 million Blue Planet Fund, resourced from the nation's international aid budget, to help eligible countries protect and restore marine ecosystems (UK Parliament 2020). Multi-donor trust fund PROBLUE, managed by the World Bank, supports the sustainable and integrated development of marine and coastal resources in a healthy ocean (PROBLUE 2020). Since 2009, \$5.4 billion in bilateral and multilateral official development assistance for the ocean has been awarded (de Vos and Hart 2020). The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is another candidate source of financing, to the degree that ocean plans and their implementation are part of a nation's nationally determined contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement and contribute to addressing the impacts of climate change on the ocean. The world's largest climate fund, the GCF is mandated to support developing countries in raising NDC ambition and realising NDC implementation—including through transformational planning.

Blue bonds

A 'blue bond' is a debt instrument issued by governments, development banks or others to raise capital from investors to finance ocean-based planning and implementation efforts that have positive environmental, economic and climate benefits (World Bank 2018). The Republic of Seychelles launched the world's first sovereign blue bond in 2018. This blended finance combines a World Bank-guaranteed Global Environment Facility concessionary loan with private sector investment to support the diversification of the country's ocean economy and transition to sustainable fisheries. It is implemented through the independent Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust and the national Development Bank of Seychelles (Sumaila et al. 2020). While promising, this approach may not be pertinent in all circumstances and can be applied to only certain types of sovereign debt.

Debt conversion

Debt conversion is an innovative method of debt restructuring in which a portion of the foreign debt of a non-OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) country is forgiven in exchange for a commitment to invest in domestic environmental conservation and sustainability projects (CSSCE 2018). In 2016, the Seychelles government entered into a debt conversion programme with the Paris Club (an international debt-relief group). One of the conditions linked to the debt conversion was the protection of 30 percent of marine and coastal ecosystems within the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), enabled by the development of the Seychelles' Marine Spatial Plan, which was supported by a grant from The Nature Conservancy (Sumaila et al. 2020). While novel, debt conversion is highly context specific and can be difficult to replicate.

These sources of financing can be used in isolation or in combination. For instance, a grant to finance sustainable ocean planning could be packaged into a larger loan that finances the implementation of the plan's economic sector development. It is important to note, as well, that a robust, knowledge-informed Sustainable Ocean Plan could help create the enabling conditions that attract private sector investment into the sustainable ocean economy.

For more comprehensive guidance, see *The Ocean Finance Handbook* (de Vos and Hart 2020).

6. What Are Some Examples of Sustainable Ocean Planning?

A number of countries around the world are already taking steps to develop some of the components of Sustainable Ocean Plans. For instance, as of December 2021, approximately 70 countries were at some stage in the process of developing a marine spatial plan, a form of spatial planning that can underpin a wider Sustainable Ocean Plan (see the Glossary for relevant definitions). About two dozen countries are developing integrated, sustainable ocean economic development plans, sometimes called ‘blue economy plans’. In addition, more than two dozen countries are developing ocean accounts. Thus, when it comes to preparing a comprehensive Sustainable Ocean Plan, countries are starting from different baselines.

Nonetheless, countries may have gaps to fill in terms of attributes and useful components of Sustainable Ocean Plans. Emerging ocean challenges and opportunities mean that no country can remain complacent; there will always be the need to expand and improve upon plans. And given that there are over 180 ocean and coastal states, many more countries need to begin developing Sustainable Ocean Plans.

For each of the nine attributes of Sustainable Ocean Plans, the following provides some real-world illustrations (recognising that one case example may instantiate other attributes as well). This non-exhaustive suite of examples draws on experiences from a range of countries. Nonetheless, the global picture for sustainable ocean planning is currently limited in geographic range. Capacity-building efforts, such as those by UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the European Commission, and a global push to develop Sustainable Ocean Plans could help redress this imbalance.

6.1 Process

Inclusive

The Northeast Regional Ocean Council Ocean Planning Committee was established in the United States to support stakeholder engagement in the development of New England’s Northeast Ocean Plan. The committee includes representatives from all 6 New England states, 6 federally recognised tribes, 10 federal agencies (including the Department of Education, Department of Transportation, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and U.S. Geological Survey) and the New England Fishery Management Council (NOP n.d.). Stakeholder engagement in the planning process was supported through decision-making meetings open to the public, outreach events, workshops, public webinars and public listening sessions (MSPG 2019b).

In re-zoning Australia’s Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan in 2004, the outputs from expert-led modelling scenarios were shared with stakeholders and used to elicit constructive and spatially specific feedback. Several formal opportunities were organised for the public to provide written comments, both prior to the development of the draft re-zoning plan and afterwards on the draft plan. The spatial plan for the large marine ecosystem was redefined in response to this feedback to meet ecological outcomes while reducing negative social and economic impacts on marine users, resulting in higher levels of public support for the plan (Lieberknecht 2020).

Integrative

Fiji’s National Ocean Policy provides a holistic framework for integrated action and partnerships across all national, regional and global ocean-related commitments.

The policy establishes the processes and principles to encourage coordination across sectors directly (or indirectly) involved in the ocean space to achieve more interlinked policies and to align with the inclusive growth aspirations of the National Development Plan. The policy establishes a National Ocean Policy Steering Committee with inter-ministerial representation that will oversee its implementation (GoF 2020).

St. Kitts and Nevis in the eastern Caribbean developed comprehensive marine zoning that integrated multiple agencies for fishing, conservation, shipping and tourism (Agostini et al. 2015). The zoning design was developed with stakeholders via a participatory process that integrated science and policy, considering options and trade-offs across multiple marine management objectives.

Iterative

In Norway, integrated ocean management plans for the Barents Sea, Norwegian Sea and North Sea have evolved over time since 2002 as new scientific knowledge has been generated and new management challenges have arisen, providing for adaptive management through regular updates. Permanent working groups provide information on economic activities, monitoring, environmental risk and scientific aspects of planning to an inter-ministerial steering committee led by the Ministry of Climate and Environment, which is responsible for developing the management plans. In 2020, the three plans were updated and merged into one white paper submitted to the parliament. Subsequent updates will occur on a regular basis every four years (GoN 2020).

Marine functional zoning (MFZ) was first proposed in China in 1988. Subsequently, the State Oceanic Administration; relevant departments of the State Council; and the governments of coastal provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have conducted large-scale MFZ covering all sea areas under their jurisdiction during three periods (Teng et al. 2019). The first generation of MFZ was developed from 1989 to 1993, the second generation was developed from 1999 to 2004 and implemented until 2010, and the third generation was developed from 2009 to 2012 and implemented until 2020. Each revised scheme entailed several

adjustments in relation to the previous scheme that enhanced the protection and utilisation of the marine ecological environment.

6.2 Content

Place-based

Fiji's National Ocean Plan calls for sustainable management of 100% of its marine areas under national jurisdiction by 2030, including internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial seas and the country's EEZ. The plan considers the connections and impacts of land-based activities, as well as those of activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction (GoF 2020).

The Seychelles' Marine Spatial Plan covers the entire EEZ and the country's territorial sea. The goals of the national plan are to address climate change adaptation, protect 30 percent of national waters (half of which should be 'highly protected') and support the Blue Economy Roadmap and other national strategies (SMSPI 2019).

Ecosystem-based

The Maritime Spatial Plan for Internal Waters, Territorial Waters and Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Latvia incorporates the ecosystem-based approach. For instance, it includes maps of benthic habitats and ecosystem services, a vulnerability assessment of marine habitats to different sea uses and an ecological impact assessment of alternative sea-use scenarios and optimal sea-use solutions (Veidemane et al. 2017).

Canada's Marine Plan Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (MaPP) used an ecosystem-based management framework for its marine spatial planning (Diggon et al. 2020). The framework considers ecosystems (e.g. structure, function, connectivity), habitats and species diversity, including how they relate to economic, social and cultural components of communities. The MaPP was the first co-led partnership among a provincial government and 17 First Nations in Canada. The ecosystem-based approach informs permit and tenure processes throughout the 102,000 square kilometre plan area and ensures that the long-term health of ocean ecosystems factors into marine-use considerations.

Knowledge-based

In developing the Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, the Coastal Zone Management Authority gathered existing data about biodiversity, habitats and marine/coastal uses and users. The authority also conducted analyses (using an ecosystem services valuation approach) to evaluate trade-offs among alternative planning scenarios. Stakeholders were engaged in all stages of the process, especially for data acquisition and ecosystem service assessments. Extensive sub-national consultations were used to build a shared understanding of science-based scenarios among decision-makers, policymakers, stakeholders and the public (CZMAI 2016).

In developing the Plan Maritime 2030: Abu Dhabi Coastal and Marine Framework Plan, the government generated three alternative, data-driven spatial scenarios to quantitatively and qualitatively analyse implications for economic development, marine conservation and public access/recreation/tourism. The scenarios were tested with stakeholders to identify a preferred spatial vision for the future of marine management (MSPG 2019c).

6.3 Impact

Endorsed

Japan's Basic Ocean Plan is approved by the nation's cabinet and implemented by a 'Headquarters for Ocean Policy' which has the prime minister as its director general (GoJ 2018).

On behalf of the national government, the president of the Federated States of Micronesia signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a plan for the sustainable development of the ocean economy, including the protection of 30 percent of national waters by 2030. The president agreed to consult with the nation's Congress and relevant stakeholders to formulate the legislative and regulatory measures for implementation (BPC 2019).

'Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy' is a major initiative to explore the full potential of the ocean's wealth to drive economic growth, launched by and housed within the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa. The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the

Environment, along with other national departments (Transport, Mineral Resources, Agriculture, Public Works and Tourism) formed the MSP National Working Group, which paved the way for the development of the Marine Spatial Planning Framework (published in 2017) and the 2018 Marine Spatial Planning Bill, passed by the national assembly, with the MSP Act coming into effect in 2020 (GoSA 2019).

Financed

The U.S. state of Massachusetts established a dedicated fund, the Ocean Resources and Waterways Trust Fund, within its Oceans Act to provide the necessary financing for developing and implementing marine spatial planning (MSPG 2019a).

The Seychelles government has pursued several innovative financing approaches to support the development and implementation of the Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan, including an ocean-based debt conversion and a sovereign blue bond (CBC 2021).

Capacitated

The UK government established a new body under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009—the Marine Management Organisation—to support marine planning in English waters. Between 2010 and 2016, the 'start-up' team of 6 grew to almost 30 people to accommodate an increasing number of plans in development and the need to implement and monitor published plans alongside those in development. The organisation deliberately sought staff with a range of backgrounds and sectoral knowledge to mirror the interests of external stakeholders. The planning team receives support from other teams within the organisation for data management, evidence gathering and communications. Additional expertise is commissioned when needed through contracts (Ansong et al. 2019).

7. What Are Some Suggested Next Steps?

The previous sections have covered the ‘what, why, how and who’ of Sustainable Ocean Plans. A follow-up question for some may be ‘how does one begin?’ Getting started is the most important thing to do; there is no need to seek perfection from the outset or otherwise delay. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that countries are starting from different initial conditions, so there is no single shared path.

The following are four ‘no regret’ initial steps for getting started on or accelerating Sustainable Ocean Plan development (in no particular order):

- **Organise:** Raise awareness within relevant ministries and establish the appropriate authority to drive the planning process forward (e.g. inter-ministerial committee with empowered leader, agency/institution with coordinating responsibility).
- **Prioritise:** Conduct an inter-ministerial consultation to identify country priorities vis-à-vis the Ocean Panel *Transformations* (covering ocean wealth, ocean health, ocean equity, ocean knowledge and ocean finance) and ensure that the forthcoming steps in developing a Sustainable Ocean Plan address these priorities in particular.

- **Take stock:** Review the potential components of a Sustainable Ocean Plan (see Figure 2) that your country (e.g. across government agencies, research institutes, industries) already has in place or is in the process of developing. Based on the stock take, identify missing components and start developing, completing or improving them.
- **Align support:** Identify what technical assistance and financial resources are needed to pursue sustainable ocean planning and line up that support domestically and/or internationally (e.g. engage the Ocean Action 2030 if needed).

Box 2 outlines a process upon which to embark once these initial steps have been taken, starting with setting the scope (e.g. vision and area to be covered) and finalising preparations.

8. Concluding Thoughts

A Sustainable Ocean Plan is a foundation for achieving the *Transformations* towards a sustainable ocean economy. It builds and improves upon current practice by bringing existing ocean plans and processes together, filling in gaps and creating an integrated whole. It bridges sectors and stakeholders, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and interests are considered. And it focuses on a triple win for people, nature and the economy.

An effective Sustainable Ocean Plan exhibits nine attributes and a suite of useful components. Nonetheless, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. And while the destination—a sustainable ocean economy—may be shared, the ports of departure and courses charted will differ across countries. Getting started is much more important than getting it perfect the first time. What *is* important is to iterate over time, continuously build domestic capacity for effective implementation and maintain top-level policymaker and institutional support.

The world faces a moment of urgency. An aspired outcome of the Ocean Panel is that by 2030 ‘Sustainable Ocean Plans are providing a credible basis for safeguarding the long-term health and resilience of the ocean, attracting investment and creating jobs to the benefit of coastal communities and national economies.’

With less than 10 years to go, ocean and coastal nations have no time to waste.

Appendix A. Guides to Support Sustainable Ocean Planning

A number of guides are available to assist countries in developing and implementing components of Sustainable Ocean Plans. Examples include the following:

Principles for integrated management

- Ecosystem-Based Integrated Ocean Management: A Framework for Sustainable Ocean Economy Development (Lieberknecht 2020)
- Integrated Ocean Management (Winther et al. 2020)
- Understanding Integrated Coastal Management – Model Course on ICM (PEMSEA 2018)
- GEF TDA/SAP Methodology (GEF IW:LEARN 2020)

Area-based plans

- Marine Spatial Planning: A Step-by-Step Approach (Ehler and Douvère 2009)
- Taking Steps toward Marine and Coastal Ecosystem-Based Management: An Introductory Guide (UNEP 2011)
- MSPglobal International Guide on Marine/ Maritime Spatial Planning (UNESCO-IOC/European Commission 2021)
- A Guide to Evaluating Marine Spatial Plans (Ehler 2014)
- Designing Marine Spatial Planning Legislation for Implementation: A Guide for Legal Drafters (O'Connor 2020)
- Marine Spatial Planning: Assessing Net Benefits and Improving Effectiveness (Jay 2017)
- Best Practices for Marine Spatial Planning (Beck et al. 2009)

Social and cultural considerations

- Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature: *Guidance for Protected and Conserved Area Governance and Management* (Verschuuren et al. 2021)
- Enabling Conditions for an Equitable and Sustainable Blue Economy (Cisneros-Montemayor et al. 2021)
- Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (FAO 2015)

Economic development strategies

- Study on the Economic Effects of Maritime Spatial Planning (European Commission 2011)
- Guidance on a Better Integration of Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Other Activities in the Coastal Zone (Stelzenmüller et al. 2013)
- Africa's Blue Economy: A Policy Handbook (UNECA 2016)

Environmental protection approaches

- The MPA Guide (Oregon State University et al. 2019)
- Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories (Day et al. 2019)
- Protecting Coastal and Marine Environments from Land-Based Activities: A Guide for National Action (UNEP/GPA 2006)
- FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries (FAO 2011)

Ocean accounts

- Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting (GOAP 2019)
- Measuring the Blue Economy: The System of National Accounts and Use of Blue Economy Satellite Accounts (Ram et al. 2019)
- Blueprint for Improved Measurement of the International Ocean Economy: An Exploration of Satellite Accounting for Ocean Economic Activity (Jolliffe et al. 2021)

Enabling policies and enabling finance

- Turning the Tide: How to Finance a Sustainable Ocean Recovery (UNEP FI 2021b)
- Ocean Finance Handbook: Increasing Finance for a Healthy Ocean (de Vos and Hart 2020)
- Unsustainable Finance in the Blue Economy: Where Does the Money Come From? (European Commission 2020)

Appendix B. Some Candidate Indicators of Implementation

Candidate indicators of implementation already exist as part of international frameworks, such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Per each of the five critical areas of the *Transformations* (see Box 1), some candidate indicators include the following:

■ Ocean wealth

- Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels (SDG Target 14.4 – Indicator 14.4.1 – Tier I). *This indicator is aligned with the United Nations System of Environmental Economic Accounts (SEEA), and more specifically with the SEEA Asset Accounts (Fisheries).*
- Sustainable fisheries as a percentage of gross domestic product in small island developing states, least developed countries and all countries (SDG Target 14.7 – Indicator 14.7.1 – Tier I).
- Ocean and offshore renewable energy research, development and demonstration (RD&D) as share of total energy RD&D budget (OECD indicator).

■ Ocean health

- Index of coastal eutrophication and plastic debris density (SDG Target 14.1 – Indicator 14.1.1 – Tier II). *This indicator is aligned with the United Nations SEEA, and more specifically with the SEEA Ecosystem Condition Account.*
- Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations (SDG Target 14.3 – Indicator 14.3.1 – Tier II). *This indicator is aligned with the United Nations SEEA, and more specifically with the SEEA Ecosystem Condition Account.*
- Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas (SDG Target 14.5 – Indicator 14.5.1 – Tier I). *This indicator is aligned with the United Nations SEEA, and more specifically with the SEEA Ecosystem Extent Account.*

■ Ocean equity

- Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognises and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries (SDG Target 14.b – Indicator 14.b.1 – Tier I).
- Extent to which Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and girls as well as youth participate in decision-making related to biodiversity (Target 20 under the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework). *This is aligned with SDG Target 5.5 – Indicators 5.5.1 and 5.5.2 – Tier I.*

■ Ocean knowledge

- Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology (SDG Target 14.a. – Indicator 14.a.1 – Tier II).
- Progress by countries in the proportion of students (Formal Education category) and number of community members (Community Engagement category) engaged in Ocean sustainability actions (United Nations Decade of Ocean Science strategy document indicators; IOC-UNESCO 2020).

■ Ocean finance

- Official development assistance, public expenditure and private expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems (Target 18 under the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework – Headline Indicator 18.0.1).

This list of initial candidate indicators of implementation is nonetheless fragmented and not comprehensive. Emerging national ocean accounts might provide insights into the ocean-related economic, social and environmental data that countries are starting to collect and could be relevant indicators of progress on sustainable ocean management. However, some new indicators may need to be identified or created.

Developing and implementing a Sustainable Ocean Plan can be itself an indicator that a country is following through on selected international commitments. One such agreement is SDG 14, which calls on nations to ‘conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development’. In particular, SDG Target 14.2 calls for countries to ‘sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans’. Because a Sustainable Ocean Plan is a foundation for achieving what this target

describes, having such a plan could be an effective indicator that a country is taking steps to achieve Target 14.2. In other words, a country that develops and, more importantly, *implements* a Sustainable Ocean Plan could report to the United Nations that it is satisfying SDG Target 14.2.

Likewise, developing and implementing a Sustainable Ocean Plan could be helpful in meeting the goals of future agreements, such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity’s Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD 2020).

Glossary

Area-based measures are important tools in ocean management. They include **marine protected areas (MPAs)**—‘clearly defined geographical space[s], recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values’ (Oregon State University et al. 2019).

Ecosystem-based management (EBM), also referred to as an ‘**ecosystem approach**’, is defined as ‘the management of natural resources focusing on the health, productivity and resilience of a specific ecosystem, group of ecosystems, or selected natural assets as the nucleus of management. It recognises the full array of interactions within an ecosystem, including with humans, and seeks integration of management planning and implementation across sectoral agencies’ (Winther et al. 2020). Core operational elements include recognising ecological connections, applying an ecosystem service perspective in decision-making, addressing cumulative human impacts, managing for multiple objectives and adapting to change (UNEP 2011).

Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), also called ‘**integrated coastal management**’, is ‘the process of managing the coast and nearshore waters in an integrated and comprehensive manner with the goal of achieving conservation and sustainable use’ (Katona et al. 2017). ICZM covers the full cycle, including information collection, planning, decision-making, management and implementation (Halpern et al. 2012).

Maritime/Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) is a public process of analysing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives that are usually specified through a political process (Ehler and Douvère 2009).

Ocean accounts are a standardised national accounting system that organises and tracks relevant social, economic and environmental information about the ocean and ocean economy to enable decision-makers to measure progress towards development and environmental sustainability goals (GOAP 2019).

Stakeholders are individuals, groups or organisations that are (or will be) affected by, involved in or interested in (positively or negatively) sustainable ocean planning and management actions in various ways. Stakeholders often hold considerable political and/or economic influence over particular areas or resources based on their historical dependence and association, institutional mandate, economic interest or various other concerns (Ehler and Douvère 2009). As such, planners should look to engage stakeholders that represent a balance of social, cultural, economic and ecological interests.

Sustainable ocean economy (sustainable Blue Economy) is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and better jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystems (World Bank and UN DESA 2017).

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Statement of Support from Ocean Action 2030

Ocean Action 2030 is a voluntary coalition dedicated to helping countries develop Sustainable Ocean Plans. Members of Ocean Action 2030 may provide technical and/or financial support to countries (where there is a 'match' between country demand and member capacity) to develop Sustainable Ocean Plans aligned with the contents of this guide:

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Blue Prosperity Coalition
- Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Global Environment Facility (GEF): Through investments fully aligned with the GEF replenishment strategy, the GEF may support eligible nations, in a process leading towards a resilient healthy ocean ecosystem
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
- Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO)
- Ocean Conservancy
- Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- The World Bank: Through its PROBLUE multi-donor trust fund, the World Bank provides technical support to its client countries as they embark on a transformation towards a Blue Economy approach, defined as the sustainable and integrated development of oceanic sectors in healthy oceans
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- World Resources Institute (WRI)
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Note: To find out more about Ocean Action 2030 and how to get engaged, please contact the Ocean Panel Secretariat info@oceanpanel.org



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