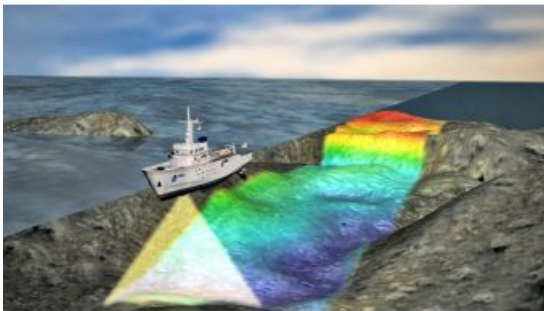


THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2021-2030

Advancing science for a sustainable ocean economy



**2021
2030** United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade) 2021-2030 seeks to generate and use knowledge for transformative actions needed to achieve a healthy and resilient, safe and productive ocean. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to strengthen the international cooperation

between all sectors and communities to conduct the science we need for the ocean we want.

The private sector, in particular the hydrographic industry, is invited to take on a leadership role to significantly contribute to reversing the trend and developing a robust and resilient Blue Economy that is needed for the prosperity of current and future generations.

What is the Ocean Decade?

Human health and well-being, including sustainable and equitable economic development, depend on the health and safety of the world's ocean. The ocean provides food and supports the livelihoods of over three billion people. It is an essential ally in the fight against climate change. Emerging services, including renewable energy, marine genetic resources and deep-sea minerals, have the potential to generate significant benefits, but they also raise questions about risks to fragile ecosystems and equitable access to the benefits generated by the ocean. From an economic point of view, the ocean is of monumental importance. In 2010, the ocean economy generated over 30 million direct, full-time jobs, and prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the ocean's economic output had been predicted to reach US\$3 trillion by 2030.

The Ocean Decade aims to accelerate ocean science and knowledge sharing for sustainable development, foster innovative partnerships for transformative science-based actions to inform policies and solution delivery, and more broadly support a well-functioning, productive and resilient ocean. Ocean science is placed at the core of the Ocean Decade's framework. It strives to harness, stimulate and coordinate research efforts of all stakeholders, at all levels to generate the information, action and solutions needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda. It will also focus on creating the enabling conditions to support active participation, including by connecting knowledge generators to the end users, and encouraging co-design and co-delivery of actions. It will look at developing the infrastructure, data, capacity and technology essential for supporting active participation and long-lasting and impactful solutions.

Data collection and data management underpin the Ocean Decade's success

Data and information are key enablers of the Ocean Decade outcomes. Digitizing, accessing, managing and, most importantly, using ocean-related data, information and knowledge will be cornerstones of its success. The ambition is to significantly improve sharing of data and knowledge that can be used to drive ocean-based solutions. The focus will be on the collective design and construction of a distributed, multicomponent digital network capable of representing the entire ocean system, including its

social and economic characteristics.

The Ocean Decade: a once in a lifetime opportunity for the ocean industries

The recent pandemic has induced high impacts on the global economy, but it has also reinforced the role of the ocean to build a more sustainable post-COVID 'new normal'. Ocean industries will continue to contribute massively to the global economy and will remain the primary commercial user of the ocean, with many businesses such as shipping, offshore oil and gas, fisheries, tourism, seabed mining, ports and renewable energy directly dependent upon their access to marine space and resources and the sustained production of those resources. Additional and emerging sectors, including deep and ultra-deepwater oil and gas, seabed mining, renewable energy, shipbuilding, hydrological and marine technology, seafood processors, maritime safety and surveillance and marine biotechnology, as well as other supporting businesses such as marine classification societies, insurers, financiers and lawyers, are also dependent on these ocean industries and provide services that enable successful ocean-based economic activities.

□ United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Achieving the Ocean Decade's objectives calls for an interdisciplinary effort among all stakeholders, at all levels. Using collective resources to understand and monitor the rapidly changing ocean and much needed solutions will lay the groundwork for equitable and sustainable ocean economic development under a changing climate. Better ocean science can lead to numerous benefits for the private sector, including cost savings, operational efficiency, increased market shares, predictable and stable supply chains, enhanced relationships with stakeholders, improved access to markets and customers, and attracting new investments.

Hence, ocean industries are well-positioned to take on a leading role to develop and scale up actions in addition to pursuing emerging business opportunities. The private sector has the expertise, the experience, the presence, the capacity and the resources to lead the needed transformative changes for a sustainable future, becoming a corporate investment in both risk mitigation and growth.

By working together, science and industry have the potential to challenge the thinking for increased inter- and trans-disciplinary ocean science, from co-design to co-delivery, and to drive technological innovation leading to accelerated impacts on sustainable development. Science-industry collaboration will improve access to and usage of scientific knowledge, contribute to reducing business risks and creating new opportunities, stimulate the innovation ecosystem and accelerate technology transfer. In addition, under the right conditions these sorts of collaborations can also bear the risks and propose audacious solutions that governments may initially be less willing to engage in – by doing this they can pave the way, foster government buy-in and scale up investments.

Considering its critical role in supporting harbour and coastal management, hydrographic charting, coastal engineering, development of offshore activities and more, the industry supporting hydrographic surveys is well placed to play a significant part in the Ocean Decade. Among many examples, the industry could support innovation in data collection and sharing required to develop the digital ecosystems envisioned by the Ocean Decade. Engagement can range from participation in existing initiatives such as Seabed 2030, which aims to map the world's seafloor by the year 2030, to leading the development of new ones to, for instance, facilitate the uptake of innovative hydrological technologies.

How can you participate?

The [Ocean Decade](#) will be implemented for and by a diverse range of ocean stakeholders, and their strong engagement will determine its success. It will propose a range of platforms and engagement mechanisms to catalyse new partnerships across sectors, disciplines and stakeholder groups.

Throughout the Decade, there will be regular *Calls for Actions*. An action could take various forms and range in scale, and will involve a diverse group of stakeholders where respective interests can be aligned in a collaborative and transformative process to deliver fit-for-purpose knowledge and solutions for a sustainable and healthy ocean. The first Call for Decade Action is currently open until 15 January 2021, with a focus on global programmes and large-scale contributions to the coordination function of the Decade. Most engagement mechanisms will be rolled out over the next 12 months and will provide a stakeholder ecosystem for science-driven innovation and development of ocean-based solutions.

□ Considering its critical role in supporting harbour and coastal management, hydrographic charting, coastal engineering, development of offshore activities and more, the industry supporting hydrographic surveys is well placed to play a significant part in the Ocean Decade. (Courtesy: NOAA)

You can commit to taking concrete actions, such as:

- Partner to contribute, leverage and accelerate ongoing initiatives, such as Seabed 2030.
- Initiate or participate in the co-design of a Decade Action in response to Calls for Decade Actions.
- Become an Implementing Partner, and convene or attend international events (all details are available on [oceandecade.org](#)).
- Get information on the Ocean Decade Alliance, which will provide a highly visible platform to catalyse large-scale commitments to the Decade through networking, resource mobilization and influence. It will provide the mechanism and an appropriate platform to organize the Alliance members' commitments and link resources to meet the priority needs of the Decade. Organizations interested in joining the Ocean Decade Alliance are invited to send an expression of interest to oceandecade@unesco.org.
- Follow the latest news and events on the Decade and participate in dialogue through the Decade Stakeholder Forum.

Showing leadership by engaging in and committing to the Decade will increase the momentum needed to transform from the ocean we have to the ocean we want. Collectively, it is possible to build a sustainable future in partnership with the world's business, policy and scientific leaders.

Conclusion

The Ocean Decade will deliver science-driven solutions to help existing and emerging businesses to reduce risks and to explore new opportunities for growth in a sustainable ocean economy. Enhancing businesses' leadership in ocean science will lead to concrete addressable actions, including capacity building and technology transfer, financing, funding and the generation of information and data, as well as establishing invaluable networks of experts and business partners. The private sector has an unprecedented opportunity to join the world's leaders in contributing to, and benefitting from, an effort to reverse the declines in the health and functioning of the ocean system. The hydrographic industry is at the forefront to contribute and innovate in response to the ocean data collection and sharing challenges.

The Decade is a pathway for businesses to demonstrate their corporate purpose by developing on commitments to build a sustainable future. Welcome aboard!

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/article/advancing-science-for-a-sustainable-ocean-economy>
