

GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON OCEANS

Concept Note

Thursday, June 8th, 2017 - Friday, June 9th, 2017
Villa Caletas Hotel
Puntarenas, Costa Rica

Background:

The global community has taken a stance in supporting a strong international environmental agenda. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, along with the foundations laid for addressing the challenges of climate change by the Paris Agreement, provide a window of opportunities for effective and urgent environmental action that can only be described as historic. There is an unprecedented consensus among decision makers of both the public and private sector, as well as strong scientific evidence that lead to the realization that social, economic, and environmental policies and practices, must start to work together and in harmony to provide realistic solutions for the increasing challenges faced by humanity.

Covering close to 70% of the Earth's surface, Oceans are central in nature's cycles, in the balance of all ecosystems and are a primary source of life in our planet. They regulate climate, produce oxygen and provide food and other resources for millions of people all around the world.

Healthy oceans are one of the best allies we can have in the fight against climate change. Oceans will capture much of the excess heat as well as a big part of the greenhouse gases that affect the ozone layer. They play an important role in climate patterns and serve as a purifier for water and air. Without question, it is in the best interest of the international community to attend the needs of the oceans and to provide strong political action towards ensuring policies that de-pollute the ocean and guarantee the perpetuity of its biological cycles.

These efforts will be relevant to address all internationally agreed goals related to oceans, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its target 14.1 which states that **by 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.**

Outcomes:

The celebration of the World Oceans Day will be an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in a participative dialogue on the health of our oceans. It intends to bring policy makers in close contact with the private sector, civil society, and academia and others to raise awareness and share knowledge on major threats,

best practices and technological innovations; in strong relation with governmental and intergovernmental processes to address marine pollution.

The event will target major stakeholders from different organizations, serving as a meeting point for future substantive dialogue on oceans. Different outcomes are expected from this Dialogue, ranging from political declarations, launching of regional campaigns, pledges, and national commitments.

Currently, the Minister of Environment of Costa Rica holds the position of President of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) and the Dialogue will support setting the path towards UNEA 3, to take place in December this year, under the theme of *"Towards a pollution free planet"*. Therefore, outcomes generated will help us building the main outcome of the upcoming UNEA meeting.

World Ocean's Day Celebration in Costa Rica- Why are we so excited to celebrate oceans in Costa Rica?

Costa Rica is located in Central America. Two of our geographical limits are the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. This has resulted that Costa Rica's marine area, (including territorial seas and exclusive economic zones), is more than ten times larger than its land mass.

Costa Rica is home of 3,5% of the world's known marine species. Its long-standing commitment in conservation and natural resources management as well as its vulnerability related to the health of its oceans are main examples to be considered and shared internationally.

With world heritage sites like Coco's Island and the strong legislation on biodiversity, marine biodiversity has become an essential part of its economy and a fundamental component of its future. Maintaining ocean biodiversity is an essential foundation not only for Costa Rica's sustainable development but also for all countries around the world.

Draft Programme

| Day 1: 8 th June, 2017 | |
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| Time | Session |
| 14:00 – 14:45 | Welcome statement President of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) |
| 14:45 – 15:00 | Feature Address <i>‘A Vision of Cleaner Seas – Ridding our oceans from the plastic scourge’</i> |
| 15:00 – 15:30 | Inspirational Insights |
| 15:30 – 15:45 | Keynote Address <i>‘Costa Rica’s approach to address ocean pollution’</i> |
| 15:45-16:00 | Coffee/tea break |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Sustainable tourism sector panel: Combatting pollution that affects recreational waters, coral reefs and other assets the sector is reliant on. Consideration of the role of the cruise and yachting sectors. Partnerships with local and state-level stakeholders to address land-based pollution and monitor health of ecosystems. |
| 17:00 – 18:00 | Maritime transport sector panel: Addressing pollution from commercial shipping activities including from shore-based facilities. Innovation to reduce risks of pollution accidents. |
| 18:00 – 18:30 | Question and answer |
| 18:30 – 19:00 | Summary of key action points |
| 19:00 – 19:45 | Presentation of Conservations efforts and strategy on Oceans by the Government of Costa Rica |
| 20:00 – 22:00 | Cultural evening hosted by the Government of Costa Rica Keynote Speaker: President of the Republic of Costa Rica |

| Day 2: 9 th June, 2017 | |
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| Time | Session |
| 08:30 – 09:30 | Marine Resource Conservation sector panel: How conservation policies and positively impact in the private sector. President of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) |
| 09:30 – 10:30 | Agriculture sector panel: Addressing pollution from crop and livestock operations through improved agronomic practices, waste recycling. Consideration of certification schemes to enhance food safety and mitigation of adverse environmental impacts. Best practices to reduce pollution from discarded fishing (ghost) gear, reducing pollution from aquaculture operations. |
| 10:30-11:00 | Coffee/tea break |
| 11:00-12:00 | Waste and chemical management: Innovation in manufacturing to minimize direct pollution, reducing packaging, increase durability of plastics, recycling and investment in cleaner production. |
| 12:00-12:15 | Question and answer |
| 12:15-13:00 | Summary of action points Adoption of Outcome Statement |
| 13:00-13:30 | Closing remarks and vote of thanks |
| 13:30-14:30 | Lunch |
| 14:30-15:30 | Press Conference |