



Towards a resilient Ocean future

Bridging science, policy and international cooperation for ocean resilience

Under the Presidency of HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, and co-organised by the **Oceanographic Institute of Monaco**, the **Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation** and the **Government of Monaco**, the MBI has, for the past fifteen years, established itself as a **unique platform for international dialogue dedicated to the future of the ocean**, bringing together scientists, policymakers, economic actors and international organisations to **advance concrete solutions for a sustainable Ocean governance and a resilient blue economy**. Rooted in Monaco's century-long tradition of ocean science, the MBI helps shape the global ocean agenda by **connecting scientific expertise with policy and action**.

Over the years, MBI discussions have accompanied, and often anticipated, the major evolutions of the global ocean agenda: the rise of Marine Protected Areas and the question of their real effectiveness, the recognition of the central role of local communities in marine resource management, the emergence of blue finance, the gradual integration of the ocean into climate policies, and the development of international governance for the high seas through the BBNJ Agreement. Beyond conceptual and diplomatic progress, the MBI continued to structure a **dialogue between science, policy, and economics** and emphasize one fundamental imperative: **turning commitments into concrete, equitable, and measurable action**.

What MBI 2026 delivered

- Shaped priorities for the post-2025 ocean agenda, assessing how major international milestones are reshaping global ocean governance and **identifying emerging opportunities and persistent implementation gaps** on the road to 2030 ;
- Convened diverse stakeholders to address the growing need for cooperation, equity and **sustainable financing mechanisms** in the face of increasingly complex geopolitical, economic and regional realities ;
- Examined pathways to the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement and Marine Protected Areas in the High Seas, with their **challenges of implementation, governance, monitoring and long-term effectiveness**.

Key mobilisation numbers

24	43%	88	30
nationalities represented	representation of the private sector	organisations represented	high-level speakers

Ministers, Secretaries of State and High-level Organisation representatives

 Wallace COSGROW Republic of Seychelles	 Sofjan JAUPAJ Government of Albania
 Dr. the Hon Arvin BOOLELL Republic of Mauritius	 Jennifer NORDQUIST World Trade Organization
 Aimé Martial MASSAMBA Republic of Gabon	

Advisory Committee for the Monaco Blue Initiative and Blue Economy and Finance Forum 2026



Karen Sack
ORRAA



Pascal Lamy
Europe
Jacques Delors



Dr Vincent Pieribone
OceanX



Opening address by HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco



Panel 3: BBNJ and High Seas MPAs



Thematic workshops

High Seas exploration and protection

Panel: BBNJ and High Seas Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

Exploring how the BBNJ Agreement can turn High Seas protection into operational, science-based and financeable action.

As the BBNJ Agreement enters its implementation phase, **robust governance, long-term financing and effective monitoring will be critical** to ensuring the success of high seas Marine Protected Areas.

Realising the treaty's full potential requires **scientific and traditional knowledge, innovation, and the amplification of the voices of indigenous and local communities, women and girls, and the next generation.** International cooperation, knowledge-sharing and equitable access to scientific and technological resources are necessary to ensure that the BBNJ Agreement can translate into effective, credible and inclusive ocean protection. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) will be key actors in identifying priority needs.



Dr Grethel Aguilar (IUCN), Kristian Teleki (Fauna & Flora), Dr Harriet Harden-Davies (University of Edinburgh), Torsten Thiele (Global Ocean Trust)

Thematic workshops

BBNJ in the Mediterranean

- Implementation must account for varying capacities across EEZs, with targeted tools for sensitive areas like the Mediterranean.
- Plan Bleu can help bridge the gap between global commitments and local action.

Priority areas and science-based approaches

- The lack of perfect data should not delay action.
- A seascape approach of ecosystem needs and pressures will be the foundation of implementation and monitoring.

Role of technology, data and AI in ocean monitoring

- AI can help process existing data and fill gaps with predictions.
- The priority is standardising metrics to compare data effectively across projects and regions.

Science as the compass guiding discussions

Science was put forward as a **source of knowledge and infrastructure that will make the BBNJ Agreement operational.** Participants highlighted the **role of ocean observation systems, monitoring technologies, AI and data-sharing platforms** in supporting the designation, management and long-term oversight of high seas Marine Protected Areas.

89 countries have ratified the BBNJ agreement

10% of the Ocean is now designated within protected and conserved areas

120 WTO Members

out of 166 have accepted the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

Saya de Malha mission report

Monaco Explorations presented the final report of its Indian Ocean mission, delivering 25 science-based recommendations to strengthen marine conservation, sustainable fisheries and regional cooperation. These recommendations provide a practical roadmap for integrating scientific knowledge into ocean governance across the Indian Ocean.

Find the report [here](#).

“**Healthy oceans are not in tension with economic prosperity – they are foundational to it.**”

Jennifer Nordquist
World Trade Organisation

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement has created a unique window of opportunity to redefine humanity's relationship with the high seas, shifting the focus from extraction to stewardship and laying the foundations for long-term benefits.
- Successful implementation will depend on ensuring that all voices are part of the process. Indigenous and local communities, women and girls, Small Island Developing States and the next generation should become essential contributors whose knowledge, perspectives and leadership can strengthen decision-making and improve outcomes.

Governing the Ocean in a fragmented world

“ A healthy ocean is not only an environmental priority, it is essential for our people, our economy, and our future. ”

Wallace Cosgrove

Principal Minister and Minister for Fisheries, Agriculture and the Blue Economy, Republic of Seychelles

The case of MPA joint management

In 2008, Mauritius and the Seychelles pioneered a Joint Management Area on their shared continental shelf, setting a milestone and providing a framework for regional ocean governance and transboundary cooperation.

“ The Ocean is our shared future, and investment is the bridge to get us there. Let us build it together. ”

Dr. the Hon Arvin Boolell, GOSK

Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, Republic of Mauritius



Their Serene Highnesses Prince Albert II of Monaco and Princess Charlene of Monaco announced a new partnership between their two Foundations with an endurance race, The Crossing, on June 19-20, 2026, across the Pelagos Sanctuary. The initiative uses **sport as a vehicle to inspire action**, promoting values of resilience, discipline, respect for nature and responsibility towards future generations while engaging new audiences in ocean protection.

Thematic workshop

Lessons from other international agreements

- BBNJ aims to strengthen existing international agreements and to add a biodiversity layer.
- There needs to be a diplomatic architecture to align cross-body coherence and regional and global objectives.

24 million km²
additional ocean area to be protected each year to reach the 30x30 target

The post-2025 Ocean agenda: consolidating milestones and confronting blockages

Moving from ocean commitments to implementation by overcoming governance, financing and coordination gaps ahead of 2030



Karen Sack (ORRAA), Dr Vincent Pieribone (OceanX), Ashleigh McGovern (Conservation International)

International milestones reached in 2025 reshaped the architecture of ocean governance, with the entry into force of the BBNJ Treaty and the **growing integration of ocean issues across climate, biodiversity and economic agendas**. The priority now is to translate this momentum into coordinated action through stronger governance, scaled-up finance and broader stakeholder engagement.

Innovative financing mechanisms and emerging projects, such as the Coral Reefs of the High Seas Coalition, are paving the way for the **first generation of conservation actions under the BBNJ framework**. The protection of an additional 24 million km² each year to achieve the 30x30 target will depend on **aligning frameworks to be cost effective in their implementation and response**.

Science as the compass guiding discussions

Participants highlighted that one of the greatest barriers to implementation remains the lack of accessible, reliable and comparable ocean data. The discussion reinforced the **need to bridge persistent knowledge gaps and ensure that science is translated into actionable tools** capable of accelerating ocean governance and protection efforts.



Thematic workshops

“ Fragmentation cannot be the future of environmental governance, partnership should be. ”

Sofjan Jaupaj

Minister of Environment, Government of Albania

“ Ocean challenges are interconnected, our response must be cooperative and pragmatic. ”

Aimé Martial Massamba

Minister of the Sea, Fisheries and Blue Economy, Gabonese Republic

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The challenge is to ensure new governance mechanisms reinforce rather than compete with one another. Strengthening links between international agreements, regional initiatives and sectoral policies is a key lever to accelerate progress and maximise the impact of available resources.
- Collaboration is key to overcome fragmentation, from the pioneering joint management of the Mascarene Plateau by Mauritius and the Seychelles to the meaningful engagement of coastal communities and ocean users. Lasting outcomes require shared responsibility, inclusive decision-making and strong governance structures capable of connecting global ambitions with local realities.

Financing the Ocean

**\$3B in 2022,
to \$18B today**
Growth of blue
bond issuances

Science as the compass guiding discussions

Reflecting the growing convergence between science, governance and finance, one of the major announcements of MBI 2026 came from **GIST Impact and Hub Ocean**, on the **creation of the world's first ocean risk datasets for listed equity investors**, to be published by the end of 2026, mapping Marine Protected Areas and other ocean-sensitive areas, to better integrate ocean-related risks into portfolio analytics and capital allocation decisions.

Governing and financing the Ocean in a fragmented world

Exploring how to navigate geopolitical instability, fragmented governance and regulatory uncertainty and not hinder blue finance.

The maturation of blue finance is **shifting the focus from pilots to scalable investment frameworks**, with standardisation and stronger science-policy-finance links emerging as key enablers of long-term resilience.

Institutional capital increasingly relies on clear standards and robust data. Emerging tools such as **ocean risk datasets** and **biodiversity credits** are strengthening the case for nature-based and community-driven solutions. Three priorities are emerging: **clearer eligibility frameworks** for blue investments, **science-based indicators** increasingly powered by AI and geospatial tools, and stronger integration between blue finance, government commitments and measurable outcomes.



Valerie Hickey (World Bank),
Sylvie Goulard (IAPB),
Humphrey Kariuki (Janus Continental Group),
Mahima Sukhdev (GIST Impact)

Thematic workshops

Impacts and adaptation for the private sector

- Regulatory and data policies for the private sector will be stronger with BBNJ.
- Early movers will gain strategic advantages (data collection, traceability...).

Financing BBNJ

- Regional clusters are emerging, but developing countries and SIDS must be included to ensure equity.
- Conservation should be science-based, use non-political data, with clear frameworks to align capital flows.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Recognise the profound shift in perception: the ocean is becoming an asset class of its own.
- Rethink how ocean value is measured and reflected in economic systems.
- Build a new generation of tools designed to make ocean dependencies and impacts visible.

Conclusion

*“ The progress made on the Ocean is real but it is also fragile. **This is precisely why platforms such as the Monaco Blue Initiative matter. They keep us anchored in science, and in collaboration** [...] Trust in science is being contested where, not long ago, it stood unquestioned. Working together is harder, across borders and across sectors. [...] It falls to States and international organisations to do three things: **set a clear framework, steer incentives, and reduce uncertainty.** ”*

HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco



“ In a time of constrained resources, we need efficiency. We have a responsibility to deploy available resources with maximum impact and maximum effectiveness. This requires much stronger coordination and collaboration between stakeholders. ”

Romain Ciarlet, Vice-chairman and CEO of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation



“ Declarations still lack one essential element: action. Looking back, it is striking to see how far we have come. Today, Ocean issues stand alongside climate and biodiversity at the top of the international agenda. But we cannot afford to be complacent. ”

Robert Calcagno, CEO of the Oceanographic Institute, Prince Albert I of Monaco Foundation

Outlook to the BEFF 2026

The Monaco Blue Initiative played a key role in feeding strategic reflections into the Blue Economy and Finance Forum (BEFF), helping to **bridge scientific knowledge, governance and financial mobilization** for ocean action.

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