

Press release  
April 7, 2026

**OCEAN: IN THE FACE OF THIS URGENT CRISIS, MONACO  
BRINGS TOGETHER SCIENCE, GOVERNANCE, AND FINANCE  
TO DRIVE ACTION FORWARD  
[MAY 27, 28, AND 29, 2026]**

While the ocean's surface temperature reached a record level in March 2026—nearly 21 °C on average, or +0.5°C compared to the 1993-2022<sup>1</sup> average—the state of ocean health is alarming. This rapid rise in temperatures, part of a troubling warming trajectory, is already disrupting marine ecosystems and intensifying pressures on a space that is central to global balances—climatic, economic, and geopolitical alike. And yet, despite the accumulation of warning signals, action still falls short of what is needed: funding remains insufficient, governance is fragmented, and projects struggle to scale up. The issue is no longer just about recognizing the urgency, but about accelerating solutions to act effectively.

To address this challenge, the Principality of Monaco will host two complementary international events on 27, 28 and 29 May: the Monaco Blue Initiative (MBI) and the Blue Economy and Finance Forum (BEFF). Co-organised by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco, these two events share a common ambition: to bring together science, governance and finance to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable blue economy.

**27 MAY - MONACO BLUE INITIATIVE: WHEN SCIENCE GUIDES ACTION**

Established in 2010, the Monaco Blue Initiative (MBI) has, over the past fifteen years, established itself as a leading platform for dialogue between scientists, public decision-makers, international organisations, NGOs and economic stakeholders. Its mission is to develop concrete, actionable solutions to the major challenges associated with ocean management and protection. The 2026 edition will bring together over a hundred leading decision-makers and experts at the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco to discuss three key topics: **the post-2025 ocean agenda** - collectively analysing how the international milestones of 2025 have reshaped ocean governance, highlighting both the progress made and the remaining challenges, and identifying the actions to be taken between now and 2030; **ocean governance and financing in a fragmented world** - although the ocean is singular, it is shaped by highly diverse human, geographical and economic realities; and the **BBNJ Agreement and marine protected areas on the high seas**.

<sup>1</sup> [Données provisoires du programme européen Copernicus](#)

Several thematic workshops will also be offered to participants, covering around ten key topics.

Speakers already announced include:

- **Sylvie Goulard**, International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPB), Co-Chair,
- **Valerie Hickey**, World Bank, Director of the Environment Division,
- **Serge Ekue**, West African Development Bank, President,
- **Karen Sack**, Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance - ORRAA, Executive Director,
- **Pascal Lamy**, Jacques Delors Institute, Coordinator of the think tank networks, former Director-General of the World Trade Organisation.

## 28-29- May BLUE ECONOMY AND FINANCE FORUM : BRINGING TOGETHER CAPITAL AND SOLUTIONS

Following on directly from the MBI, the Blue Economy and Finance Forum (BEFF) will take place on 28 and 29 May at the Grimaldi Forum. Its aim is to **translate the priorities identified by the scientific and governance communities into concrete economic and financial drivers**, by bringing together more than **300 decision-makers**, investors, financial institutions, businesses, philanthropic organisations and politicians. The ambition is clear: **to identify investment opportunities and solutions capable of scaling up.**

From its very first edition in 2025, held as part of the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, the BEFF sent out a strong message: **1,800 participants** from nearly **100 countries**, over **€25 billion** in identified investments and a further **€8.7 billion** committed to accelerating the transition to a sustainable blue economy.

In 2026, the Forum will continue to pursue its aim of fostering more direct links between capital and projects. Key topics at the heart of the discussions will include: **financing the blue economy, decarbonising maritime transport, sustainable food resources from the sea, and integrating the blue economy into global financial strategies.**

One of the highlights of the 2026 event will be an innovation **hub showcasing** companies whose sustainable solutions are paving the way for a sustainable and regenerative blue economy.

Several speakers have already been announced, including:

- **Marisa Drew**, Standard Chartered, Head of Sustainability
- **Adelàide Cracco**, European Investment Fund, Investment Manager
- **Bertrand Charron**, Aquaculture Stewardship Council, Global Director of Research and Analysis
- **Guillaume Branco**, Eurazeo, Chief Executive Officer
- **Mike Velings**, Aqua-Spark, Co-founder and CEO

## TWO EVENTS, ONE COMMON THEME

The MBI raises the questions that science and governance can no longer avoid. The BEFF explores **practical ways of addressing them**. This is the strength of the model: bringing strategy and finance together to transform an environmental issue into a structured economic lever. In a context where the ocean absorbs nearly a third of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, faces growing pressures and sees its ecosystems deteriorating at an alarming rate, the MBI and the BEFF aim to provide a complementary response to the same challenge: **accelerating the collective response to ocean challenges.**

**Cyril Gomez, Chief Operating Officer of the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco, emphasises:**  
*“In recent years, real progress has been made – from the BBNJ Agreement to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – yet a significant gap remains between political commitments and real-world implementation. The barriers we face today are political and financial. It is no longer a lack of scientific knowledge that holds us back, but a lack of execution. The challenge is no longer understanding what needs to be done, but delivering it. This is precisely what the continuum formed by the Monaco Blue Initiative and the Blue Economy and Finance Forum is designed to address: aligning ocean governance, financial flows, and the development of a sustainable blue economy. Without clear governance and transparent rules, the private sector cannot engage or invest with confidence. In Monaco, we offer a unique three-day platform to tackle these issues at the highest level ».*

**Romain Ciarlet, Vice-President and CEO of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation:**

*“The Ocean lies at the heart of our future: it regulates the climate, sustains vital biodiversity, and underpins a significant share of the global economy. Yet its balance is now under threat. In the face of this global challenge, it is imperative to accelerate the transition towards sustainable and regenerative models. The Blue Economy and Finance Forum acts as a catalyst for action, mobilising private sector actors, philanthropists and investors to turn commitments into concrete solutions for the Ocean.”*

**MBI: Program :** <https://www.monacoblueinitiative.org/en/>

**WhatsApp group:** <https://chat.whatsapp.com/IfjuLE5AivjGYQ6Qn6mvKt?mode=hqctshi>

**BEFF: Program :** <https://www.beffmonaco.org>

**WhatsApp group:** [https://chat.whatsapp.com/GjTCfvUpsCj6nCxqjM3ys5?mode=gi\\_t](https://chat.whatsapp.com/GjTCfvUpsCj6nCxqjM3ys5?mode=gi_t)

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