

OCEAN ACTION AGENDA OF FRANCE AND GERMANY

We, the French Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, solemnly reaffirmed in the Aix-la-Chapelle treaty, signed on 22 January 2019, our full commitment to protecting the environment, preventing biodiversity loss, as well as combatting climate warming.

We reiterate the importance of achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14 on the conservation and sustainable use of ocean, seas and marine resources by 2030. We recognize the essential role of the ocean for biodiversity conservation, climate regulation, food security, the livelihoods of coastal communities, and sustainable economic development. We acknowledge the increasing pressures faced by coastal and marine ecosystems and in turn by the people depending on these ecosystems, including climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, habitat destruction and overexploitation of natural resources. We emphasize the critical importance of protecting, sustainably managing and restoring the ocean as a shared global responsibility.

In order to limit the negative effects of climate change, including on oceanic systems, and as we approach the 10-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement of 2015, we recommit to implement the decisions of the global stocktake from COP28 in Dubai, including transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems and tripling renewable energy capacity globally, including sustainable renewable energies from and in the ocean.

The Ocean plays a critical role in mitigating the effects of climate change and it is essential we protect it better. We are fully conscious of the degrading state of our shared Ocean and call on the international community to act quickly and decisively to strengthen its protection by swiftly implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity's global commitment to conserve at least 30 percent of the ocean by 2030 and to halt and reverse any unsustainable economic exploitation, including in the particularly sensitive polar waters and support the development of a Sustainable Blue Economy, build on human rights-based and gender-transformative approaches.

As the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) begins, co-chaired by France and Costa Rica (Nice, June 9th-13th, 2025), we commit to supporting the

implementation of an ambitious “Nice Ocean Action Plan” that enables and expands the protection, conservation, and sustainable use of our Ocean, in accordance with scientific evidence and best practices.

We also recall the historic partnership between our two countries as founding members of the European Union and their continuing leadership in advancing European integration and addressing global challenges.

We reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism and international law, and emphasize the universal and unifying character of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and reaffirm that the Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, and that its integrity needs to be maintained.

We call on all States to swiftly ratify the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and to end plastic pollution to protect human health and the environment from its adverse effects. We therefore support, at the second part of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, the conclusion of the negotiations on the legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, which should be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics, as mandated by UNEA resolution 5/14.

We have therefore come to an understanding on the following joint pledges and initiatives:

1. Implementing the BBNJ Agreement

We welcome the historic adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) and are committed to its rapid implementation to protect marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

We pledge to:

- Expedite our respective ratification processes to ensure the BBNJ Agreement enters into force as soon as possible, to ensure a first COP takes place in 2026;
- Jointly advocate for and support the establishment of priority Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in regions of particular ecological significance, where our scientific expertise can be effectively deployed;
- Promote initiatives to provide support to developing countries for implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, especially in terms of MPAs, with a particular focus on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and coastal nations in Africa;
- Collaborate on scientific research in the high seas to strengthen the evidence base for protection and/or restoration measures and ensure that the best available science guides decision-making under the BBNJ Agreement;
- Promote transparency and inclusive governance in BBNJ implementation mechanisms, ensuring meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders, especially Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

2. Fast-tracking Marine Protected Areas within national jurisdictions

Germany and France are deeply dedicated to achieving the 30x30 goal of protecting the ocean as part of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) of the CBD. MPAs in coastal and marine ecosystems have vital functions supporting food security, income generation, climate resilience as well as biodiversity protection for sustainable livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Linking high seas MPAs with national MPAs is needed to ensure ecological connectivity with regard to migratory corridors, spawning and breeding grounds, and ecological interactions.

We pledge to:

- Provide continued support for the Blue Action Fund as a joint initiative in partnership with Sweden, Norway, Ireland and the Green Climate Fund.
- Strengthen the impact and reach of the Blue Action Fund by bringing in new partners to support MPA implementation in developing countries and innovative finance vehicles, with the aim to leverage private capital for sustainable blue economy investments as well as ocean conservation, including the implementation of MPAs.

3. Ending Plastic Pollution through a Global Treaty

We recognize the urgent need to address the growing crisis of plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. We are dedicated to working in close concert to finalize an ambitious and effective international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.

We pledge to:

- Advocate for a comprehensive treaty that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics, including production, design, consumption, waste management, and prevention of leakage into the environment;
- Support the establishment of binding global targets for reducing primary plastic polymer production and consumption, phasing out problematic plastic products and chemicals of concern with particular focus on single-used and short-lived plastic products as well as plastic products containing the most hazardous chemicals; improving the design of plastic products to cause minimum environmental and health impacts, and ensuring high rates of reuse and recycling, in pursuit of circular economy approaches;
- Advocate for effective and fit-for-purpose means of implementation, including the mobilization of resources from all sources: public, private, domestic and international, taking into account the polluter-pays principle; the establishment of a financial mechanism within the treaty to support implementation of the Treaty in countries most in need, in particular Least Developed Countries and Small Island States; the enlargement of the donor base and the contribution to the Financial Mechanism beyond the scope of traditional donors;
- Advance the harmonization of standards and methodologies for monitoring plastic pollution and assessing progress toward treaty objectives;
- Strengthen our respective domestic policies on plastic pollution in alignment with the treaty's objectives, setting an example of ambitious implementation.

4. Strengthening Marine Ecosystems and Sustainable Fisheries Management

Resilient marine ecosystems are essential for all life on earth. Therefore, it is essential to protect, restore and strengthen marine ecosystems, their biodiversity, protect fish stocks through sustainable management and put an end to overfishing. Effective ecosystem-based approaches to regional management of fisheries resources are critical for the conservation of marine biodiversity as well as the socio-economic welfare of coastal communities and beyond.

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is one of the threats to marine ecosystems and sustainability worldwide. We are dedicated to fighting against IUU fishing, and call on all countries to join in protecting and strengthening biodiversity in marine ecosystems and a sustainable fisheries management in line with science on stocks, their viability and their recovery. Respect and support for fishermen and women, especially traditional and artisanal fishing methods in this regard is paramount, acknowledging their crucial contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of coastal communities and as stewards of ocean health.

We call on countries (and pledge) to:

- Increase their investments in the strengthening and restoration of marine ecosystems;
- Ban environmentally unsustainable fishing methods and support fishermen and women in implementing environmentally-sound fishing practices;
- Protect vulnerable areas and restrict bottom trawling in such areas;
- Ratify the World Trade Organisation's "Fish 1" agreement of June 2022 which aims to ban harmful subsidies that encourage overfishing and IUU fishing and ensure a balanced and swift conclusion to additional rules "Fish 2" to prevent subsidies from contributing to overfishing and fleet overcapacity;
- Ratify the International Maritime Organization's 2012 Cape Town Agreement on fishing vessels over 24 meters, to enhance fishing safety;
- Ratify the FAO Port State Measures Agreement to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and to collect data on beneficial owners to limit impunity, via the PSMA dedicated instrument;
- Strengthen transparency in the fisheries sector, e.g., by supporting the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI).

5. Promoting the protection of the international deep sea and pursuing caution on Deep-Sea Mining

We share strong concerns about the potential environmental impacts of deep-sea mining activities and recognize the need for a strict application of the precautionary principle to the exploitation of mineral resources in the international seabed area.

We pledge to:

- Continue to support at least a precautionary pause on deep-sea mining, i.e., to not support any deep-sea mining projects until there is sufficient scientific evidence that such activities can be conducted without causing harmful effects to marine species and ecosystems;
- Work together within the International Seabed Authority (ISA) to develop a robust regulatory framework that applies the highest environmental standards and implements the precautionary principle in all aspects of deep-sea mining governance;
- Promote greater transparency in ISA decision-making processes and strengthen provisions for environmental impact assessment and monitoring and for a robust ISA compliance framework;
- Advocate for the establishment of large-scale MPA in the Area to safeguard unique and vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems, as the development and establishment of areas of particular environmental interest that would be entirely protected from deep-sea mining;
- Support and enhance scientific research to improve understanding of deep-sea ecosystems and their role in global biodiversity and climate regulation, as well as research into alternative sources of critical minerals;
- Engage with industry stakeholders to encourage the development of circular economy approaches and alternatives to mineral extraction from the deep sea.

6. Protecting science-based policymaking for the ocean through knowledge initiatives

We recognize that effective ocean governance and conservation must be based on comprehensive scientific knowledge. To address gaps in our understanding of ocean ecosystems and processes, we support several initiatives that aim to

further develop our knowledge of the ocean. We have the common goal of strengthening these, utilizing synergy effects and avoiding duplication.

We pledge to:

- Mobilize our respective research vessels, scientific expertise, and other resources to conduct coordinated ocean observation and research campaigns, with an initial focus on the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea;
- Develop and deploy innovative technologies for ocean observation, including autonomous underwater vehicles, remote sensing capabilities, and other advanced monitoring tools;
- Strengthen the international cooperation for a better use of satellite data;
- Establish a joint data-sharing platform to facilitate open access to ocean data collected through the initiative, promoting transparency and collaborative research;
- Support early-career researchers and foster the next generation of marine scientists;
- Engage with existing international ocean observation networks and programs to maximize synergies and avoid duplication of efforts;
- Develop targeted research programs addressing key knowledge gaps relevant to policy priorities, including marine biodiversity, climate change impacts, and the sustainable use of marine resources.
- Ensure participation of international experts, including from Indigenous Peoples and local communities with a view to integrating their relevant traditional knowledge.

In this context, we would like to draw attention to the transformation of Mercator into the new intergovernmental organization Mercator Ocean International.

We also look forward to the launch and integration of the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability into UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, to assist governments on their request in developing and implementing sustainable ocean plans and policies so as to reach their international commitments.

7. Supporting the European Pact for the Ocean

We affirm our strong commitment to the European Union Ocean Pact, taking strictly into account the respective competences of the European Union and of its Member States. We pledge to work together to ensure that this initiative establishes the European Union as a global leader in ocean protection, and sustainable blue economy development.

We pledge to:

- Advocate for an ambitious and comprehensive European Ocean Pact that addresses the multiple challenges facing our Global Ocean, including biodiversity loss, planning activities, innovation and resilience of coastal territories, climate impacts, the unsustainable use of marine resources, and that promotes research, innovation, resilience of coastal territories, and EU food sovereignty;
- Support the expansion of effectively managed marine protected areas to cover at least 30% of the EU Member States' waters by 2030, with at least one-third of these areas under strict protection;
- Promote ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management, marine spatial planning and other maritime activities in EU Member States' waters, as well as through the EU's contribution to International Ocean Governance through its work in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and Regional Fisheries Bodies RFMO/s and RFBs, ensuring the recovery and long-term sustainability of marine ecosystems;
- Advance the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to achieve Good Environmental Status in all European seas;
- Support the development of sustainable blue economy sectors in the ocean and in EU Member States' waters, including offshore renewable energy, low carbon energy production and distribution in coastal and marine environments, sustainable aquaculture and fisheries, and eco-tourism, while ensuring that economic activities do not compromise coastal and marine ecosystem health; to protect ecosystem services and livelihoods, an integrated, rights-based and environmentally friendly approach needs to be applied.
- Support the development of fisheries-specific due diligence legislation to ensure sustainable fisheries and aquaculture value chains in which EU citizens operate.

- Strengthen international cooperation, especially for fighting against IUU fishing, and make maritime transport carbon neutral in 2050, notably through the support and implementation of the 2023 International Maritime Organisation's Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships.
- Safeguard Europe's strategic and security interests by supporting a safe and secure Ocean with the development of a security and defense pillar within the Pact.
- Establish a joint France-Germany task force to develop specific proposals for the European Ocean Pact.

8. Developing Sustainable AI for the Ocean

As members of the Sustainable AI coalition, we are convinced that artificial intelligence holds immense potential to support ocean health and knowledge — through improved monitoring, predictive modelling of environmental changes, and optimized management of marine resources.

However, we seek to ensure that the development and deployment of AI technologies respect planetary boundaries. This means taking into account their environmental footprint — notably energy use and associated CO₂ emissions, which contribute to ocean warming, acidification, and degradation of marine ecosystems.

We therefore call upon the research community, civil society organizations, and industry to develop or co-develop AI solutions that are not only tailored to ocean conservation and regeneration needs, but also designed with sustainability at their core. Addressing the dual challenge of ocean protection and AI's environmental impact should be a shared priority.

9. Defending international law and the Law of the Sea

We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to upholding the primacy of international law in governing relations between states, with particular emphasis on the law of the sea.

We aim to coordinate and work together to:

- Defend, uphold and promote the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas must be carried out;
- Oppose any attempts to undermine or reinterpret UNCLOS provisions or to assert maritime claims inconsistent with international law;
- Support the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes in accordance with the principles and rules of UNCLOS and the means and procedures for the settlement of disputes provided for in the Convention;
- Strengthen coordination of our naval and coast guard activities to contribute to maritime security, freedom of navigation, and the fight against transnational maritime crimes;
- Strengthen our cooperation within NATO, the European Union, and other relevant forums to address emerging maritime security challenges, including hybrid threats;
- Promote capacity building for maritime governance in developing countries, particularly in the Global South, to strengthen compliance with and implementation of the law of the sea.

10. Supporting an ambitious low-carbon industrial maritime strategy for a sustainable ocean

We call for a European maritime industry that reduces dependency of fossil fuels, while helping to achieve climate objectives in the maritime sector, in line with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) 2023 Strategy on reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships and the EU Clean industrial Deal.

Regarding the decarbonization of maritime transport, we are fully dedicated to the implementation of the Fit for 55 package, including the FuelEU Maritime Regulation as well as the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme, which has been extended to maritime transport since 1 January 2024. Moreover, we will support the introduction of a global pricing mechanism to incentivize compliance with the decarbonisation objectives of the maritime sector in line with the targets set by the IMO 2023 Strategy on reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships ensuring a just and equitable transition of the global shipping sector. We welcome in this regard the approval of the corresponding IMO Net-Zero Framework by the IMO in April 2025.

We call to:

- Create the conditions for the decarbonization of maritime transport, which will also contribute to climate mitigation, sovereignty and technological excellence;
- Adopt the IMO Net-Zero Framework dedicated to the decarbonization of shipping as a new chapter in Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) by October 2025;
- Put in place a framework and environment favorable to research and innovation, to support the transition to new technologies and provide the sector with technologies to meet the challenges of digitalization and the environmental transition of fleets;
- Guarantee the attractiveness and safety of the EU maritime sector, in a context of decreasing fleets under European flags, by adopting measures at European level to protect the social and working conditions of seafarers and by supporting the efforts to uphold the highest standards with regard to the treatment of seafarers globally through the effective implementation of international law, including the conventions adopted under the IMO.

11.Recovering Munitions from the Sea

We recognize the significant environmental, health, and economic risks posed by conventional and chemical munitions dumped in EU Member States' waters, particularly in the Baltic and North Seas, and are dedicated to addressing this legacy issue.

We pledge to:

- Launch a joint initiative to map and assess the risks associated with munitions dumped in the Baltic Sea and North Sea, using state-of-the-art detection and monitoring technologies, thus building on given legal national responsibilities and technical achievements of riparian countries including already available mapping and scientific assessment, in particular as regards the Baltic Sea area;
- Develop and test innovative technologies and methodologies for the safe recovery and disposal of munitions from the seabed, minimizing environmental impacts during remediation activities, including building on already available knowledge and gained technical experience in the

framework of the *German immediate action programme on unexploded munitions in the North and Baltic Seas*;

- Establish a joint expert group to share best practices and coordinate national efforts on munitions recovery and disposal;
- Advocate for increased mobilization of EU support and coordination for munitions remediation projects through relevant instruments, including Horizon Europe and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund;
- Engage with other countries sharing the Baltic and North Seas to develop a comprehensive regional approach, as has already been initiated by HELCOM for the Baltic Sea, to addressing the munitions problem;
- Recognize the marine ecosystem-related and potential economic benefits of munitions remediation for the blue economy, including increased opportunities for fisheries, tourism, low carbon energy production and distribution, and offshore renewable energy development in remediated areas.

Conclusion

Through this Joint Declaration, we reaffirm our dedication to protecting and restoring the Ocean as a vital global commons and ensuring its sustainable management for current and future generations. We recognize that the challenges facing the ocean require coordinated international and multilateral action and are determined to lead by example through our bilateral cooperation and joint initiatives.

We call upon other nations, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to join us in these efforts to safeguard the ocean's health, restore marine ecosystems, and ensure that humanity's relationship with the ocean is based on principles of sustainability, equity, and respect for the natural environment.

Signed in Nice on June 10, 2025

For the French Republic,

For the Federal Republic of Germany,

Agnès Pannier-Runacher

Minister of Ecological Transition

Carsten Schneider

Minister for the Environment,
Climate Action, Nature
Conservation and Nuclear Safety