

High-level expert meeting summary

Towards an Effective High Seas Treaty: Building on and Strengthening Regional Ocean Governance

Hosted by Germany and the STRONG High Seas Project

**Saturday 30 March 2019, 9.30 am – 4.00 pm
22 West 27th Street, New York 10001**



Background

Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) cover about half of the planet's surface, host a significant portion of its biodiversity, and deliver crucial ecosystem services. In September 2018, after more than a decade of discussions, States began formal negotiations for a legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ.

Strong regional and sectoral governance mechanisms can underpin an ambitious and effective international treaty, which can in turn provide further support for regional initiatives. Delegations and observers to the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) have been considering the role and contributions of existing organizations and instruments, but are yet to converge on a consensus regarding the modalities for effectively building on and fostering existing governance mechanisms within the framework of a future treaty.

Summary

On 30 March 2019 in New York, the STRONG High Seas project, together with Germany, hosted a high-level expert meeting alongside the second meeting of the International Conference working towards a high seas treaty. It brought together around 30 experts for an informal discussion regarding the legal and institutional framework of a new agreement, in particular options for the establishment of MPAs and promoting coherence of AMBTs under a new agreement.

This meeting builds on a prior expert meeting held during the first round of negotiations in September 2018 that brought together 65 participants to discuss the role and contribution of regional and sectoral ocean governance in developing and underpinning the implementation of a strong high seas agreement.

The day began with a short welcome and introductory presentation by Guido Genrich, Head of the Delegation of Germany, and Dr. Carole Durussel, co-lead of the STRONG High Seas Project. This was followed by informal working groups and discussions held under the Chatham House rule. The first session explored possible roads for designating and establishing protected areas and management tools, in the second session different implementation options were discussed and in the last round the role and tools for monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) were considered.

Annex I: Agenda

9h30 – 9h45 Welcome

Welcome by Guido Genrich, Head of the Delegation of Germany

Welcome by Dr. Carole Durussel, IASS/STRONG High Seas

9h45 – 10h15 Setting the scene

Glen Wright, IDDRI/STRONG High Seas

Q&A and discussion

10h15 – 11h15 Session 1 – Designation/establishment of protected areas and management tools

Which regional and sectoral bodies currently designate protected areas or other area-based management tools for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity?

What initiatives are taking place to enhance cross-sectoral cooperation and management? What have been the key challenges and successes of these initiatives?

How will MPAs/ABMTs be proposed and designated under a new agreement? What will be the role of regional and sectoral organizations in this process?

11h15 – 11h45 Coffee Break

11h45 – 13h00 Session 2 – Implementation of protected areas and management tools

How could the agreement treat ABMTs already established under existing frameworks?

What mechanisms might be appropriate for facilitating cooperation and coordination on the identification and implementation of ABMTs?

What will be the role of regional and sectoral organizations in the implementation, monitoring and review?

What obligations might a treaty place on States to encourage effective implementation?

13h00 – 14h00 Lunch

14h00 – 15h15 Session 3 – Compliance and oversight of protected areas and management tools

What technological and policy tools are available that allow for monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of activities in ABNJ?

Which organizations currently have a MCS mandate or role in ABNJ?

How might a new agreement allow all parties to participate in oversight and MCS of ABNJ? What will be the role of regional and sectoral organizations in compliance and oversight?

15h15 – 1600 Discussion on key recommendations

16h00 Closure of the meeting

Annex II: Participants

Juliette Babb-Riley, Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations

Peni Baselala, Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC)

Ben Boteler, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)

John Brincat, European Commission

Nichola Clark, Pew Charitable Trusts

Klaudija Cremers, Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDR)

Duncan Currie, High Seas Alliance

Daniela Diz, University of Strathclyde

Daniel Dunn, Duke University

Carole Durussel, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)

David Freestone, Sargasso Sea Commission

Guido Genrich, German Federal Foreign Office

Kristina Gjerde, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Alistair Graham, World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Lowri Griffiths, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Cristóbal Hernandez, Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Peggy Kalas, High Seas Alliance

Cristian Laborda, Laborda Abogados SpA

Anca Leroy, French Ministry for Ecological and Inclusive Transition

Ronan Long, World Maritime University

Sophie Mirgaux, European Commission

Essam Mohammed, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

Takehiro Nakamura, UN Environment

Tim Packeiser, World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Sandra Schöttner, Greenpeace

Matthias Steitz, German Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety

Torsten Thiele, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)



Sebastian Unger, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)

Mentor Villagomez, Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS)

Glen Wright, Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)

Joan Yang, Pew Charitable Trusts

About the STRONG High Seas Project

The STRONG High Seas project is a five-year project that aims to strengthen regional ocean governance for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. It is coordinated by the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) and implemented together with the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), BirdLife International, the International Ocean Institute (IOI) – Southern Africa, the Universidad Católica del Norte (UCN), WWF Colombia, and WWF Germany. Working with the Secretariat of the Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (CPPS; Permanent Commission for the South Pacific) and the Secretariat of the West and Central Africa Regional Seas Programme (Abidjan Convention), the project will develop and propose targeted measures to support the coordinated development of integrated and ecosystem-based management approaches for ocean governance in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The STRONG High Seas project has the following overarching objectives:

1. Facilitate the development of improved management approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction in the Southeast Pacific and Southeast Atlantic regions;
2. Identify best practices and provide support to regional institutions and national authorities for implementing existing regional instruments;
3. Develop options for regional governance in a future international instrument under UNCLOS and transfer regional lessons learned to the global level to promote ocean governance.

For more information about the STRONG High Seas project, please visit: <https://www.progocean.org/our-work/strong-high-seas/> or contact: stronghighseas@iass-potsdam.de.

Partners of the STRONG High Seas project



International Ocean Institute
African Region



Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision of the German Bundestag

Climate Initiative The STRONG High Seas project is part of the International (IKI; <http://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/>). The Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) supports this initiative on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag.