



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KAGAWARAN NG KAPALIGIRAN AT LIKAS YAMAN**



**MEMORANDUM**

**FOR : The Administrator**  
National Mapping and Resource Information Authority

**The Directors**  
Biodiversity Management Bureau  
Environmental Management Bureau  
Foreign Assisted and Special Projects Service

**FROM : The OIC Director**  
Policy and Planning Service

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INPUTS AND COMMENTS ON THE NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE FOR THE OCEAN DECADE AND THE NATIONAL  
COMMITTEE ON MARINE SCIENCES (NCMS) RESOLUTION  
CREATING THE NATIONAL DECADE COMMITTEE (NDC)**

**DATE : 02 APR 2024**

This is in reference to the letter from Dr. Ivan Anthony S. Henares, Secretary-General, UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines, dated 07 March 2024, requesting inputs and comments on the (1) National Conference for the Ocean Decade and (2) NCMS Resolution creating the NDC.

It can be recalled that the Secretary has accepted the Co-Chairmanship of the soon to be established NDC, alongside Secretary of Science and Technology, Renato U. Solidum, Jr. as Co-Chair. With this, the NCMS was updated on the Department's relevant programmes and projects in support of the Ocean Decade last 15 February 2024.

In this regard, may we kindly request for your inputs and comments on the attached action documents on or before 05 April 2024. Should there be no substantive inputs and comments received by the deadline, please allow us to conclude that you are agreeable with the said document.

For consideration, please.

  
**CHERYL LOISE T. LEAL**

MEMO NO. 2024 - 307



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07 March 2024

**SECRETARY MA. ANTONIA YULO-LOYZAGA**  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

Dear *Secretary Loyzaga*,

The UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines (UNACOM) humbly expresses its gratitude to the Secretary for accepting the Co-Chairmanship of the soon-to-be established National Decade Committee or NDC (with SOST Renato U. Solidum, Jr. as Co-Chair). Through your designated DENR representatives during the meeting of the National Committee on Marine Sciences (NCMS) held at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on 15 February 2024, the body was updated on DENR's relevant programmes and projects in support of the Ocean Decade.

It may be recalled that last year, one of the country's champions for promoting the Ocean Decade, Senator Loren Legarda, committed to support PH initiatives that contribute to the thrusts of the Ocean Decade including the establishment of a National Decade Committee and holding of a National Conference. Since then, UNACOM, in coordination with your good Office and other members of the NCMS, vigorously promoted the Ocean Decade and gathered inputs to prepare proposals relative to the establishment of a National Decade Committee and conduct of a National Conference.

Relative to this, UNACOM requests inputs and comments of DENR and DOST (as Co-Chairs of the NDC) to the herein attached action documents as a result of discussions and recommendations during the recent NCMS meeting.

1. National Conference. This two or three day event is proposed to be held in May (Month of Ocean) or September 2024 (Maritime and Archipelagic Nation Awareness Month or MANAMo) and will have as among its main objectives the launching of the National Decade Committee and its action plan for this year and the coming years.
2. NCMS Resolution. Among others, the omnibus resolution includes delineation of role of co-chairs, vice-chairs and other members of the NDC.

Furthermore, we hope to meet you or your designated focal point for NDC, together with the DOST Secretary or his designated focal point, on the third week of April 2024 to further seek guidance on the abovesited matters. Our Programme Officer for Science, Mr. Freddie Blanco, who can be reached at landline no 8834-3447; mobile no. 0908633981 or email address [fablanco1966@gmail.com](mailto:fablanco1966@gmail.com) and [unacom@dfa.gov.ph](mailto:unacom@dfa.gov.ph), will coordinate with your Office regarding this meeting.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

**DR. IVAN ANTHONY S. HENARES**  
Secretary-General



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**NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE OCEAN DECADE (2021-2030)  
May or September 2024, Manila, Philippines**

**DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE**

**BACKGROUND / RATIONALE**

On 05 December 2017, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the **Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030** (also referred to as the **Ocean Decade**) to mobilize ocean stakeholders worldwide behind a common framework that will ensure ocean science can fully support countries in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The marine realm is the largest component of the Earth's system that stabilizes climate and supports life on Earth and human well-being. However, the First World Ocean Assessment released in 2016 notes the cycle of decline in ocean health, with changes and losses in the structure, function, and benefits obtained from marine systems. Productive habitats from coastlines (mangroves), coastal shallows (corals and seagrass), open ocean, and deep seas (ocean benthos) are being lost, eroded, or undermined as a result of extractive and non-extractive activities at local and global scales. In addition, the impact of multiple stressors on the ocean is projected to increase as the human population grows towards an expected 9 billion by 2050. Action needs to be taken.

***The primary motivation for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development is to support efforts to reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health and create improved conditions for sustainable development of the ocean, seas, and coasts.***

The Decade will stimulate action over the next ten years (2021-2030) in areas of critical importance for the planet, people, prosperity, peace, and partnership. More coordinated and consolidated observations and research will contribute to the UN processes protecting the ocean and its resources, such as the Aichi Biodiversity targets, the SAMOA Pathway, the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The vision of the Ocean Decade is **'the science we need for the ocean we want.'** The mission of the Ocean Decade is **'to catalyze transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development, connecting people and our ocean.'**

The **Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO** has been tasked with designing the Ocean Decade and consulting governments, UN partners, scientific organizations, the private sector, and civil society to deliver, together, the ocean we need for the future we want.

## **POSSIBLE PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES**

Ocean Decade actions include programmes, projects, activities, and/or contributions.

- A Decade programme is typically global or regional in scale and will contribute to achieving one or more of the Ocean Decade Challenges. It is long-term, multi-year, interdisciplinary, and multinational. A programme will consist of component projects and enabling activities.
- A Decade project is a discrete and focused undertaking. It may be regional, national, or sub-national, and will typically contribute to an identified Decade programme.
- A Decade activity is a one-off standalone initiative (such as an awareness-raising event, a scientific workshop, or a thematic training opportunity). It enables a programme or project or directly contributes to an Ocean Decade Challenge.
- A Decade contribution supports the Decade by providing a necessary resource (e.g., funding or an in-kind contribution). A contribution can support either the implementation of a Decade Action or the coordination functions of the Decade.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITY**

The newly-established National Decade Committee (NDC), supported by the National Committee on Marine Science (NCMS) of the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines, in consultation and cooperation with its partners, will plan and implement programmes/projects/activities as the PH contribution and support to the Ocean Decade (2021-2030).

To fully promote the Ocean Decade (2021-2030), the NDC will organize a ***National Conference for the Ocean Decade (2021-2030)***.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This kick-off conference for the Ocean Decade (2021-2030) aims to:

- Promote the Ocean Decade (2021-2030) throughout the country, covering Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao;
- Identify possible partners in each group of islands to implement the Ocean Decade in the PH; if possible, designate a focal person or lead institution in each island group for the Ocean Decade; and
- Formulate a National Plan of Action or Roadmap for the Ocean Decade

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

After the implementation of the activity, the following shall be accomplished:

- The Ocean Decade (2021-2030) is strongly promoted throughout the country;
- Partners are identified and encouraged to participate in and implement projects and activities to support the implementation of the Ocean Decade in the country; and
- A National Plan of Action or Roadmap for the Ocean Decade is initiated.

## DATE AND VENUE

This will be a three-day event with a two-day Conference (in PICC) and a one-day learning visit (site to be discussed). The Conference could coincide with the celebration of the Month of the Ocean in May 2024. UNACOM will coordinate with DENR and DOST on their preference. Another option is in September 2024, during the Maritime and Archipelagic Nation Awareness Month (MANAMO).

## PARTICIPANTS

\_\_\_\_\_ (number of) participants will be invited during the event to represent the different stakeholders from each island group (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao) who could contribute to promoting and successfully implementing the Ocean Decade. Equal representation of both men and women will be considered. Young professionals and student representatives may also be invited.

## PROPOSED PROGRAM

### DAY 1

#### Morning Session

08:00 – 09:00 Registration

09:00 - 09:45 Opening Ceremonies

Messages

DENR, DOST, DFA, UP-MSI, DA and Senator Loren Legarda

09:45 - 12:00

Introduction of Participants

UNACOM

Photo opportunities

Introduction to the Ocean Decade (2021-2023). UNESCO Paris  
Establishment of the National Decade Committee by the Member States  
IOC-WESTPAC

Break

PH Contribution to SDG 14 (Life Under Water)

PSA, NEDA or  
other concerned  
agencies

A Preview of the Philippines' National State  
of the Coasts (SOC) Report

DENR

Pagtanaw 2050

DOST/NAST

## Open Forum

12:00 - 14:00 - Lunch

14:00 - 18:00 - Afternoon Session

The afternoon session will be devoted to the presentations, focusing on the **7 Ocean Decade Outcomes**. Representatives of national agencies, private institutions, and NGOs/civil society groups will provide at least two presentations for each Decade outcome.

1. A **clean ocean** where sources of pollution are identified and reduced or removed. (Decade challenge: Understand and beat marine pollution)

Possible resource persons: UP-MSI  
Greenpeace  
PH DENR-EMB

2. A **healthy and resilient ocean** where marine ecosystems are understood, protected, restored, and managed. (Decade challenge: Protect and restore ecosystems & biodiversity)

Possible resource persons: DENR-BMB  
WWF Philippines

3. A **productive ocean** supporting a sustainable food supply and a sustainable ocean economy. (Decade challenges: Sustainably feed the global population and Create a digital representation of the ocean.)

Possible resource persons: DA  
Century Tuna  
PhilSA

## Health Break

4. A **predicted ocean** where society understands and can respond to changing ocean conditions. (Decade challenges: Expand the Global Ocean Observing System and Unlock ocean-based solutions to climate change)

Possible resource persons: NAMRIA  
Climate Change Commission  
UP Resilience Institute

5. A **safe ocean** where life and livelihoods are protected from ocean-related hazards. (Decade challenge: Increase community resilience to ocean hazards)

Possible resource persons: DOST-PHIVOLCS  
DOST-PAGASA

6. An **accessible ocean** with open and equitable access to data, information and technology, and innovation. (Decade challenges: Create a digital representation of the ocean and Skills, knowledge, and technology for all)

Possible resource persons: Philippine Space Agency (PHILSA)  
maritime universities or centers of excellence  
which offer 1 or 2 courses related to ocean science

7. An **inspiring and engaging ocean** where society understands and values the ocean in relation to human well-being and sustainable development. (Decade challenge: Change humanity's relationship with the ocean)

Possible resource persons: DFA  
National Museum  
Oceana Philippines (UP Diliman)  
National Coast Watch Council

## **OPEN FORUM**

**18:30** Dinner with Audio Visual Presentation

## **DAY 2**

The NDC can invite resource speakers to talk on the

1. Current policy initiatives of the PH Government that will impact the ocean, such as the

Blue Economy Bill

Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Bill  
PAGTANAW 2050 (NAST)

UN High Seas Treaty (also known as the Biodiversity Beyond National  
Jurisdiction of BBNJ Treaty)

DENR 30x30

PCAARRD's Industry Strategic Science and Technology Plans - Corals

National Museum, National Commission on Culture and the Arts,

UP CRADLE, and the UP School of Archaeology (underwater cultural  
heritage)

2. Initiatives from the private sector/NGOs/ECOPs (Early Career Ocean Professionals) related to the ocean (not part of the presentation on the 1<sup>st</sup> day) (potential presentors):

Save the Seas  
Wildlife  
Conservation CI  
HOLCIM

3. Case studies from UNESCO-designated and inscribed sites in the Philippines and selected sites outside the Philippines:

Palawan BR c/o Palawan Council for Sustainable Development  
Puerto Galera Biosphere Reserve  
Albay Biosphere Reserve  
Tubbataha World Heritage Site  
Puerto Princesa Subterranean River or PPUR

4. Youth-led initiatives for the ocean

## **DINNER**

## **DAY 3**

1. Discussion on Preparation of National Action Plan for Ocean Science Decade (tap academe/NGO/Private sector as a partner in facilitating the discussion)
2. Presentation of Preliminary inputs to Draft National Action Plan

## **LUNCH**

3. Synthesis (Day 1-3)
4. Call to Action
5. Ceremonial Turnover of Output
6. Closing Message





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## **RESOLUTION CREATING THE NATIONAL DECADE COMMITTEE**

**WHEREAS**, on 05 December 2017, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the **Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030** (also referred to as the **Ocean Decade**) to mobilize ocean stakeholders worldwide behind a common framework that will ensure ocean science can fully support countries in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**WHEREAS**, the primary motivation for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development is to support efforts to reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health and create improved conditions for sustainable development of the ocean, seas, and coasts.

**WHEREAS**, the vision of the Ocean Decade is 'the science we need for the ocean we want.' The mission of the Ocean Decade is 'to catalyze transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development, connecting people and our ocean.'

**WHEREAS**, the **Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO** has been tasked with designing the Ocean Decade and consulting governments, UN partners, scientific organizations, and the private and civil society to deliver, together, the ocean we need for the future we want.

**WHEREAS**, the Ocean Decade Implementation Plan offers a coordination framework to coordinate and promote the Decade globally and in all regions, leaving no one behind and empowering stakeholders to engage, plan, and implement Decade actions in a spirit of co-design and co-delivery.

**WHEREAS**, as part of this framework, the National Decade Committees will be essential elements to engage national stakeholders, facilitate national contributions to the Decade, and promote awareness and interest. These voluntary and multi-stakeholder platforms the Legislature of the State of California in recent years has proposed, passed, and signed into law several bills addressing a range of land use planning and housing issues; and will be vital in linking national action to the international Ocean Decade framework.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in view of the foregoing, the National Committee on Marine Sciences (NCMS) of the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines, hereby approves the following:

- 1. NCMS to support the establishment of the National Decade Committee (NDC). A National Decade Committee's primary responsibility is to serve as a central hub that connects and engages national-level actors participating in**

the Ocean Decade. This will support the nation's formal Ocean Decade governance and coordination structures. At the national level, it will coordinate a vast array of stakeholders. It will facilitate co-design and co-delivery of Decade Actions (at the national level) and access to benefits derived from the Decade, including data, products, science-policy advice, and capacity development.

1.a. Responsibilities. The NDC, supported by the National Committee on Marine Sciences (NCMS), shall have the following responsibilities:

- Conduct regular meetings on a date agreed upon by the members. In the interim, the UNACOM shall serve as the Secretariat of the Committee.
- Promote the Ocean Decade within their Offices, partners, and networks.
- Facilitate the planning and implementation of national priorities for the Decade by developing a National Decade Action Plan. Organize a national kick-off Conference for the Decade.
- Seek international support and collaborate with international partners for technical assistance, funding, and capacity-building initiatives.
- Foster regional cooperation by engaging with the neighboring countries to share resources, knowledge, and best practices. Make use of WESTPAC as a mechanism for cooperation and knowledge sharing.
- Leverage public-private partnerships by encouraging collaboration among government agencies, private sector entities, and NGOs to pool resources and expertise and drive innovation.
- Utilize existing networks and platforms to promote the Ocean Decade, leveraging existing organizations and initiatives to strengthen the NDC's foundation and reach.
- Seek political support by reaching out to "champions" in the Executive and Legislative branches of the Government.

1.b. NDC Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The NDC shall be co-chaired by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), with the University of the Philippine Marine Science Institute or UP-MSI and Philippine Coast Guard or PCG as Vice-Chairs. The elected Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs shall serve for two (2) years. An election shall be held for the Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs every two (2) years thereafter.

The Co-Chairs shall have the following responsibilities:

- Manage the affairs of the NDC and shall provide leadership to enable the NDC to effectively carry out its purpose.
- Preside over committee meetings, ensuring they are conducted in an efficient, effective, and focused manner; establish rules of procedure to be followed at each NDC meeting; facilitate discussion during the meeting; encourage all members to participate in the decision-making process.
- Liaise closely with the Secretariat about dates, arrangements, and agendas for NDC meetings;
- Monitor that decisions made at meetings are implemented;
- Represent the NDC at meetings, functions, and events and act as its spokesperson as appropriate; and,
- Carry out any other duties and responsibilities as deemed necessary.

Either of the Vice Chairs shall perform the Chair's duties and responsibilities in the absence or unavailability of either Co-Chair.

The heads of the member agencies shall designate their permanent and alternate representatives to the NDC. They shall serve as members of the NDC for two (2) years (unless their Heads designate another representative/s within the period). The member agency's representatives to the NDC shall be designated every two (2) years thereafter.

Any member agency may decide not to be on the NDC at any time through an official communication to the Committee. At present, the NDC is composed of representatives from the following:

- Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
  - Office of the Secretary
  - Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB)
  - National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA)
- Department of Science and Technology
  - Office of the Secretary
  - Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Service Administration (PAGASA)
  - Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD)
  - Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS)

- Department of Agriculture (DA)
  - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)
- Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)
  - Maritime and Ocean Affairs Office (MOAO)
  - UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines (UNACOM)
- National Museum of the Philippines (NMP)
- Philippine Coast Guard – Marine Environmental Protection Command (PCG – MEPCOM)
- Philippine Navy – Naval Meteorological and Oceanographic Center (PN – NAVMETOC)
- University of the Philippines – Marine Science Institute (UP – MSI)

The NDC shall invite other government agencies or private institutions to be part of the Committee as deemed appropriate and necessary.

The members of the NDC shall have the following responsibilities:

- Endeavour to attend the Committee meetings; provide comments on papers in advance when unable to attend;
- Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda, papers, and any emails before the meeting; Discuss with the Chair/s before the meeting if there is a need to clarify anything;
- Participate fully in the meeting, listen to the other Committee members, contribute positively to the discussion, and provide concise comments;
- Draw attention to any potential conflicts/problems/challenges that may arise in the meeting;
- Fulfill any responsibility assigned during the meeting and be prepared to report back on its progress at the next meeting;
- Maintain confidentiality where required.

#### 1.c. Funding/cost

- The members of the NDC shall voluntarily provide funds for the regular activities of the NDC (member agencies can alternately host the regular and special meetings of the Committee).
- Funds for the NDCs' planned programmes, projects, and activities

shall be borne solely by the proponent/partner, or jointly with a member or members of the NDC.

- In cases of participation in international, regional, sub-regional, or national meetings, conferences, workshops, etc., the member agency's Office shall provide funds for the travel, unless the Organizer will cover the travel costs.
- UNACOM shall provide a modest honorarium to the permanent and alternate representatives of the NDC at every Committee meeting. If there will be no volunteers to host meetings, UNACOM, as Secretariat, shall provide support in terms of venue for meetings and meals of the Committee members.

**1.d Terms and conditions**

- This resolution shall commence on the date agreed upon by the NDC members and remain in full force and effect until 31 December 2030.
- Any part of this resolution may be amended from time to time by mutual agreement of the NDC members.
- Neither Committee members shall have the right to terminate this TOR at any other time, unless such termination is mutually agreed upon by the members hereto.
- Unless otherwise amended, the NDC shall automatically be dissolved at the end of the Ocean Decade (31 December 2030)

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the representatives of the member agencies of the National Committee on Marine Sciences (NCMS) of the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines (UNACOM), present during its meeting on 15 February 2024, at the Department of Foreign Affairs, hereto affix their signatures on this \_\_\_\_ day of (month), Pasay City, Philippines:

Name	Member Agency	Signature
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