



G20 SOUTH AFRICA 2025



OCEAN20 NEWSLETTER

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Taking The Ocean Inland Mbombela Community Outreach

An Ocean20 outreach event took place on 26-27 May 2025, at the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) Lowveld Garden under the theme “Why Do Oceans Matter to Inland Communities?”. The event highlighted how inland communities are directly connected to the ocean through climate, water, and food systems. Prof. Blade Nzimande, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), delivered a powerful keynote address, emphasizing that decisions made far from the coast still impact ocean health.

Through engaging talks and hands-on activities, attendees discovered how rivers like the Crocodile River are connected to ocean ecosystems, and how the ocean influences weather and climate. Participants also learned about exciting career opportunities in the Blue Economy. Cultural stories blended with scientific insights, sparked conversations on how inland communities can play an active role in ocean conservation. The programme created a platform for local youth and residents to share personal experiences with changing climate patterns and river health, reinforcing the Minister’s message that both inland and coastal communities must work together to protect South Africa’s oceans and biodiversity.

Stakeholder Inception Meeting

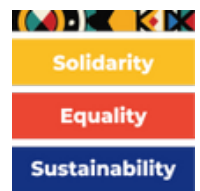
Following the outreach event, Ocean20 hosted a hybrid Stakeholder Inception Meeting on 28 May 2025 at the University of Mpumalanga. This meeting brought together key partners, including representatives from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), the DSTI, universities, and industry groups.

The meeting was opened by Dr. Mary-Jane Bopape, Managing Director of NRF-SAEON, who welcomed attendees and set the tone for a day of collaboration. Dr. Tammy Morris, Ocean20 South Africa Lead Coordinator, provided an update on Ocean20 activities for 2025, followed by presentations on ECON-SA for early-career ocean professionals, low-cost monitoring tools for communities, and proposals to expand SAMREF into a more inclusive research and industry platform. Interactive discussions on Ocean Economy and Blue Foods explored how ocean-based food systems can support sustainable development, emphasizing real inclusion, support for small-scale fishers, and the need for better data to protect marine resources.

These early discussions laid the groundwork for a clear, actionable roadmap aligning South Africa’s Ocean20 efforts with national development goals and global commitments such as the SDGs and the UN Decade of Ocean Science.



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Ocean20 at UNOC-3: Taking South Africa's Ocean Message to the World



On 9 June 2025, O2O South Africa took center stage at a vibrant side event of the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, France. Hosted by NRF-SAEON in partnership with the UN Global Compact, the session highlighted Africa's leadership in ocean innovation and practical steps to turn ambition into action. Dr. Tamaryn Morris and Prof. Juliet Hermes presented Ocean20's vision under South Africa's G20 Presidency, showcasing efforts to connect science, policy, and communities in building an inclusive ocean economy.

The event was officially opened by Dr. Dion George, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, and Ms. Sanda Ojiambo, UN Assistant Secretary-General. The panel featured Dr. Janice Trotte-Duhá (Brazil), Ms. Yuna Sellami (EU Commission), Dr. Herland Cerveaux (OceanHub Africa), Ms. Ayla Bajwa (DP World), and Ms. Bernice Mclean (AUDA-NEPAD), moderated by Mr. Erik Giercksky (UNGC). Speakers discussed the importance of unlocking finance, improving data and governance, and advancing inclusive, locally led ocean solutions.

Finally, three powerful initiatives were announced in support of the Ocean20 vision:

1. The launch of intergenerational dialogues with AAORIA's Sieglinde Gruber
2. The release of the Ocean Investment Protocol by the UN Global Compact
3. The introduction of Towards IPOS (International Platform for Ocean Sustainability) led by Tanya Brodie Rudolph.



School Engagement: Argo Floats

As part of ongoing efforts to inspire young minds, the Ocean20 team recently visited Rallim Secondary School to share the story of deploying Argo floats to understand the ocean. Learners explored how this advanced ocean observing technology helps scientists study temperature, salinity, and currents to better understand climate and ocean health. The interactive session connected global ocean science with students' local experiences, sparking excitement about ocean careers and showing how important our oceans are.



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Engaging G20 Sherpas: Bringing the Ocean to the Top of the Agenda



On 26 June 2025, Ocean20 officially presented its recommendations related to the Priorities of the South African G20 during the 3rd Sherpa Meeting, held in Sun City. Ocean20 was represented by Dr. Tammy Morris and Ms. Nicole du Plessis.

The meeting, chaired by Mr. Zane Dangor, Director-General of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation and South Africa's G20 Sherpa, brought together Sherpas who play a key role in shaping the Leaders' Summit agenda and setting global priorities. Ocean20's recommendations briefing note presented practical, inclusive proposals to support sustainable ocean governance and unlock the potential of the blue economy. These recommendations were shaped by extensive engagement with various stakeholders through events such as the Ocean20 Launch, Inception Meeting, and the high-level UNOC-3 session.

During her address, Dr. Morris emphasized that a healthy ocean ensures global food security, climate resilience, energy systems, and trade routes. She stressed that protecting the ocean must go hand in hand with creating fair economic opportunities, especially for developing countries and coastal communities.

The Sherpa engagement reinforced Ocean20's goal to keep ocean stewardship at the heart of the G20 agenda and to ensure ocean priorities extend beyond 2025, supporting the UN Decade of Ocean Science and the global path toward Agenda 2030.

Upcoming Events:

Ocean20 South Africa Mid-Way Meeting
 27 August 2025 |  Online

Register [here](#)

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