

Ocean20 South Africa Close-Out Report



Solidarity

Equality

Sustainability

Contents

1. Message from the Ocean20 South Africa Coordination Team.....	3
2. Introduction.....	4
3. Ocean20 Launch.....	5
4. Inception Meeting.....	6
5. Mid-Way Meeting.....	8
6. Ocean20 Summit.....	9
7. Engagements with other G20 Groups.....	10
8. Conference Workshops and Side Events.....	11
9. G20 Social Summit.....	16
10. Communication and Media Reach.....	18
11. Briefing Notes.....	23
12. All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Series.....	24
13. Key achievements/outcomes.....	26
14. Lessons learned.....	26
15. Conclusion.....	27
16. Abbreviations.....	29

1. Message from the Ocean20 South Africa Coordination Team

Dear Ocean20 South Africa Partners, Participants, and Stakeholders,

As we reach the end of Ocean20 South Africa, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on what we've accomplished together and to thank everyone who made this year such a success.

When we started this process, we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. We knew that bringing together civil society organisations, researchers, policymakers, youth advocates, business and community leaders was very necessary in today's climate, but would be challenging, but the collaboration we've witnessed has exceeded our expectations. Your shared commitment to transforming knowledge into action, and advancing sustainable and inclusive ocean economies has been truly inspiring, and it's been an honour to coordinate this work alongside such passionate and dedicated people.

The momentum we've built together, the networks we've formed and strengthened, and the commitments we've made throughout this process are just the beginning. While this particular chapter closes, the real work of ocean stewardship and policy advocacy continues, and we're confident that the groundwork we've laid will support meaningful change in the years ahead.

We're especially grateful for the insights, expertise and commitment that each of you brought to the table. Without this we would not have had the visibility we had throughout this year, including our role as part of the G20 Social Summit. The recommendations and initiatives that emerged from Ocean20 South Africa are richer and more grounded because of your contributions, and we remain committed to supporting their implementation going forward.

Thank you for your trust, your energy, and your unwavering dedication to our shared ocean. We look forward to seeing how this work continues to unfold and to staying connected as we all move forward in our efforts to create a more sustainable and equitable blue future.

With gratitude and optimism,
The Ocean20 South Africa Coordination Team

2. Introduction

The Ocean20 initiative has grown into the G20's principal civil society engagement platform for the ocean, advancing actionable ideas that link ocean stewardship with climate resilience, livelihoods and inclusive economic development. Its genesis dates to the Indonesia G20 Presidency in 2022, when Ocean20 was launched as an official G20 dialogue, developed in partnership with stakeholders including the World Economic Forum, to place the ocean squarely on the global economic and sustainability agenda.

Under the India Presidency in 2023, the Ocean20 dialogue was expanded through targeted convenings and public engagement activities, such as coordinated beach-cleaning events and regional dialogues, that broadened participation and underscored the agenda's emphasis on community action and marine litter.

In 2024, the Oceans20 social engagement group was formally inaugurated during the G20 presidency of Brazil. Brazil convened a series of webinars and events, culminating in a high-profile Oceans20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro that consolidated the earlier work into the first Oceans20 [Communique](#) and elevated Ocean20's visibility; this helped to translate the dialogue into a concrete platform and catalysed broader stakeholder engagement.

Building on this trajectory, South Africa assumed stewardship of Ocean20 in 2025 and committed to strengthening the initiative and its science-policy foundations. Led by the NRF-SAEON Egagasini Node in partnership with the United Nations Global Compact, and supported by an advisory team comprised of the Troika¹ and key partners, Ocean20 South Africa (Ocean20SA) focused on deepening engagement across African stakeholders, amplifying science-led inputs (including ocean observation, modelling and community science), and ensuring that the Ocean20's platform were accessible to policy makers, industry and coastal communities. Across a programme of national and international events during 2025, Ocean20SA worked to translate recommendations into implementable actions, emphasising inclusive finance, capacity building, and the role of the ocean in secure and equitable development.

As this closing report demonstrates, Ocean20's value lies not only in raising the ocean's profile among the world's largest economies, but in building durable partnerships, mobilising expertise across science and civil society, and creating a

¹ Represented by INPO and WHOI.

pathway for the G20 to support equitable, evidence-based ocean governance into the future.

3. Ocean20 Launch



Participants attending the Ocean20 Launch at the ICSHMO Conference.

Ocean20SA was officially launched on 2 April 2025 during the 14th International Conference on Southern Hemisphere Meteorology and Oceanography (ICSHMO) in Cape Town, bringing together global ocean stakeholders to reaffirm the country's commitment to inclusive, science-based ocean governance under its G20 Presidency. A key moment was the strong message of support from the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Prof Blade Nzimande, who underscored South Africa's dedication to advancing ocean science, strengthening South–South cooperation with Brazil, and promoting ocean literacy as a foundation for sustainable development. A message of support was also provided by Women20 Chair, Prof Narnia Bohler-Muller (HSRC). Leaders from government, academia, civil society, and international organisations further highlighted the importance of sustainability, regional partnerships, and the blue economy, with Brazil sharing their continued support and reflecting on insights from their 2024 Oceans20 experience.

South Africa's Ocean20 framework, presented by Dr Tammy Morris, outlined a quadruple-helix model driving practical, Africa-focused interventions aligned with global ocean governance priorities. Closing the event, Prof. Juliet Hermes called for collective action, emphasising that the ocean must be actively represented in decision-making spaces and encouraging all sectors to contribute meaningfully to shaping the Ocean20 processes.

The launch was followed on the 3rd April 2025 by a workshop on 'Advancing Innovative Technologies for Coastal Resilience' hosted in partnership with the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance (AAORIA). Coastal resilience and adaptation was highlighted as a crucial aspect of ocean sustainability and economic growth, and innovative technology can help advance Coastal Resilience efforts.

The recording of the Launch Event can be watched here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SMQB5N-qKE>

4. Inception Meeting



Dr Gilbert Siko (Department of Science Technology and Innovation), addressing the community members of Mbombela at the Ocean Outreach Event.

As part of the commitment to community outreach and "Taking the Oceans Inland", Ocean20SA hosted a three-day engagement in Mbombela from 26–28 May 2025, combining

community engagement with the formal national Stakeholder Inception Meeting. These events were held on the sidelines of the 2nd Research and Innovation Working Group (RIWG) Meeting led by the DSTI. The first two days focused on public engagement at the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) Lowveld Garden. On the first day, the team was joined by the Minister and Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Prof Blade Nzimande and Dr Nomalungelo Gina, respectively. The Minister delivered a keynote address emphasising South Africa’s commitment to inclusive ocean governance and the importance of recognising that inland communities are also directly connected to the ocean through climate, water systems, and livelihoods. Activities over 26 and 27 May included science engagement sessions, demonstrations on river–ocean linkages, cultural storytelling, and discussions on blue economy opportunities for youth, women, and local communities.

The sessions resonated strongly with participants, many of whom expressed how impactful it was to engage with ocean issues in an inland context and to see their lived experiences reflected in the discussions. Community members and youth welcomed the opportunity to share their own stories of changing river health, climate impacts, and livelihoods, reinforcing the value of creating inclusive spaces where local knowledge informs national and global ocean dialogues.

Due to the success of the event and the engagement of participants, NRF-SAEON intends to make this an annual event in different inland locations.

The Stakeholder Inception Meeting was held on 28 May 2025 at the University of Mpumalanga, bringing together government, academia, civil society, industry partners, and early-career professionals through a well-attended hybrid meeting. Opening the session, Dr Mary-Jane Bopape, Managing Director of the NRF-SAEON, emphasised collaboration as the foundation for South Africa’s Ocean20 process, followed by Dr Tammy Morris who outlined national priorities for 2025, including ocean finance, accessible ocean technology, blue food, and renewable energy, while linking these efforts to global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030). Participants engaged in a dynamic exchange on the meaning of “ocean economy” and “blue economy,” underscoring the need for shared language and practical inclusion, particularly for youth, women, and small-scale fishers, including inland communities. Presentations showcased active Ocean Actions across the country, from ECON-SA’s support for early-career ocean professionals to community-driven monitoring tools, a reimagined SAMREF platform, and a Blue Foods panel highlighting opportunities in aquaculture, small-scale fisheries, and market access. The meeting reinforced that data, partnerships, and local innovation are central to advancing a sustainable ocean economy, setting the stage for a collaborative national contribution to the G20 process, and demonstrating how inland engagement can meaningfully shape South Africa’s ocean sustainability agenda.

The recording of the Stakeholder Inception Meeting can be watched here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyKkJo-U1lo>

5. Mid-Way Meeting



Ocean20 Mid-Way meeting being hosted online with more than 100 national and international attendees.

The Ocean20 Mid-Way Meeting, held virtually on 27 August 2025, brought together a broad community of national and international ocean stakeholders to reflect on progress since the launch and inception meeting and identify priorities ahead of the G20 Leaders' Summit. Opening remarks by Prof Juliet Hermes and Dr Tammy Morris highlighted how Ocean20 has elevated the ocean within G20 discussions and reaffirmed the need for a just, inclusive and sustainable ocean economy. The meeting showcased diverse innovations and proposals, including South Africa's community-driven ocean co-management and women's leadership in marine science initiatives, China's blue economy programmes managed by the [China Ocean Development Foundation](#), Saudi Arabia's [WAVE](#) and 'Quieter Oceans' initiatives, and ocean innovation financing platforms, demonstrating the depth of global engagement. Discussions emphasised the need for stronger partnerships and the importance of connecting existing initiatives, rather than duplicating effort.

A final panel discussion, "Beyond 2025 – A Global Commitment to Shared Ocean Futures", featured members of the Ocean20 South Africa Advisory Group, including the UN Global Compact, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), the Brazil National Oceanographic Research Institute (INPO), and NRF-SAEON. The discussion emphasised the need for clear and practical recommendations that G20 leaders can realistically act on, while also ensuring greater inclusivity by amplifying voices from developing nations. Panelists emphasised the need for long-term collaborations that extend beyond South Africa's 2025 presidency to ensure Ocean20 leaves a meaningful and lasting legacy.

Closing the session, Ms Nicole du Plessis underscored that progress depends on collaboration and coherence, with recommendations to the G20 needing to be practical, inclusive, and globally relevant. Overall, the Mid-Way Meeting served as a pivotal checkpoint, aligning efforts

across regions and sectors while laying the groundwork for a strong Ocean20 contribution to the G20 Social Summit and sustained momentum beyond 2025.

The Ocean20 Mid-Way Meeting report can be read here: [Mid-Way Meeting report](#)

6. Ocean20 Summit



Participants attending Ocean20 South Africa Summit 2025.

The Ocean20SA Summit, held from 4–5 November 2025 in Cape Town, marked the culmination of South Africa’s Ocean20 Chairship and brought together G20 member and partner states, policymakers, researchers, civil society, youth representatives, and private-sector partners to reflect on progress and consolidate collaboration for a more inclusive and sustainable ocean future. The programme opened with an isiZulu performance by Ms Mpume Mthombeni, grounding the event in South Africa’s cultural and spiritual connection to the ocean. In her opening remarks, Dr Tammy Morris highlighted the achievements of the year, from the April launch and the “Taking the Oceans Inland” engagements to the strengthened partnerships that have embedded ocean priorities across national and regional agendas. Participants also received updates from Prof Carlos Duarte on global coral reef restoration efforts under the G20-mandated [CORDAP](#) programme.

The Summit blended science, creativity, and collaboration, with ocean-themed exhibitions and an interactive “Future Thinking and Seeds” workshop, led by WITS University, that invited participants to imagine and design positive ocean futures. Across the venue, artworks from Blue Schools learners, scientist-artists, and winning photographs from the [2025 All-Atlantic Photo Competition](#) were displayed. The Summit also showcased exhibitions from the South African National Women in Fisheries & Aquaculture (SANWFA), Captain FanPlastic, and several other organisations, each highlighting various ocean initiatives. The artwork highlight was the showcasing of the ‘Ocean20 Celebration’ Tapestry (cover image) to commemorate South Africa’s G20 Presidency.



South African National Women in Fisheries & Aquaculture (SANWFA) Member Exhibiting.



Artwork done by the NRF-SAEON Blue School Scholars.

The second day featured four expert panels on women’s leadership in fisheries and aquaculture; regenerative tourism and industry engagement; marine spatial planning and ocean governance; and supporting early-career ocean professionals. Across these discussions, speakers underscored the importance of inclusive governance, community-centred innovation, capacity building, and evidence-informed decision-making, emphasising that South Africa’s blue economy can only grow through meaningful participation and equitable access to opportunities.

The event concluded with a formal handover of the Ocean20 Chairship to the United States. Dr Diane Foster, speaking on behalf of the incoming Chairship, commended South Africa for strengthening Ocean20 and elevating global understanding of the relationship between ocean health, people, and the planet. Mr Imraan Patel (DSTI) reflected on South Africa’s leadership as the first African nation to host the G20 Presidency and highlighted how Ocean20 successfully connected communities, scientists, policymakers, and industry “from coastal towns to inland provinces.” The year’s work, captured in [ten briefing notes](#) and calls to action, provides a strong foundation for the next phase of Ocean20, ensuring that South Africa’s contributions continue to shape global ocean priorities beyond 2025.

7. Engagements with other G20 Groups

Throughout the year, the Ocean20 team had bilateral meetings with other engagement groups to seek advice and alignment. A key outcome was the activities throughout the year with Women20.

Within the government, the primary engagement and support was through the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) which led the Research and Innovation Working Group (RIWG). Ocean20 attended the 1st RIWG, 23-25 February 2025, in Bloemfontein, to familiarise with the G20 processes.

A crucial moment was the opportunity to present the Ocean20 recommendations at the 3rd Sherpa Meeting, 26-27 June 2025, Sun City. The recommendations built on the ongoing discussions within Ocean20 and emphasised the belief that a well-managed ocean is foundational to a fairer, more sustainable global economy—leaving no community, region, or nation behind.

Engagement Group meetings attended:

Engagement Group	Date	Role / Activity
W20 Launch	26 Feb 2025	Statement of support provided by Ocean20. Watch here .
W20 Inception Meeting	21–22 May 2025	Attended as an observer. Watch here .
W20 Summit	12–14 Oct 2025	Co-organised panel: “Invisible No More: Women’s Leadership in the Economies We Can’t Overlook”
Y20 Summit	18–22 Aug 2025	Attended as an observer.
T20 Meeting	3 Jul 2025	Attended as an observer.

The Ocean20 also co-hosted a webinar with Science20 on the 28th August 2025 on “Open Climate: Advancing data sharing for climate action through academia and research communities”. The webinar explored how academia and research communities - particularly within G20 countries - can take a leading role in advancing the Open Climate agenda. Webinar link and presentations can be accessed here: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11911/451>

Other related meetings include:

1. G20 Social Summit Stakeholder Meeting, 10 October 2025, Freedom Park Heritage Site and Museum, City of Tshwane and online.
2. Briefing to the African diplomatic community organised by SAIIA/AUDA-NEPAD/UNDP, “G20 Dialogue Session: Strategic Advocacy for a Prosperous Africa”, 16 October 2025, Pretoria. Represented Ocean20 on the panel “G20 Engagement Group Recommendations”.

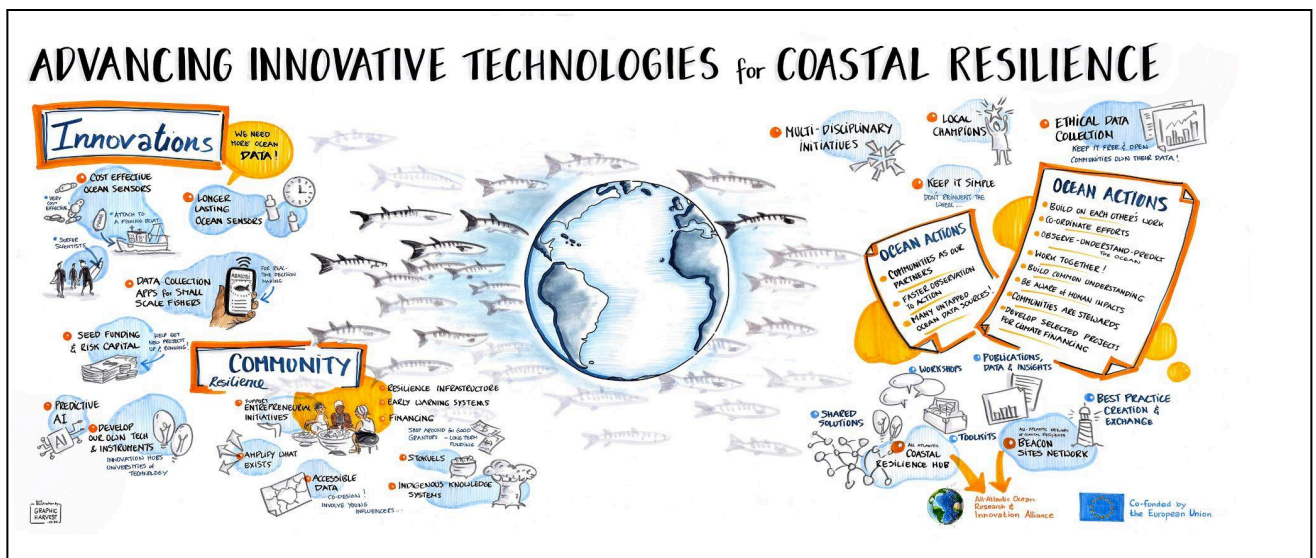
8. Conference Workshops and Side Events

Workshop on ‘Advancing Innovative Technologies for Coastal Resilience’

14th International Conference on Southern Hemisphere Meteorology and Oceanography (ICSHMO), 3 April 2025 - Cape Town, South Africa

Coastal regions in developing countries are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and extreme weather. This workshop considered how these nations can strengthen resilience despite financial, technological, and infrastructure constraints. The workshop was coordinated in collaboration with the OKEANO CSA in support of the All Atlantic

Research and Innovation Alliance (AAORIA). Opening remarks were provided by Mr. Jonathan Heimer (KDM, Germany) introducing the AAORIA focus on two action areas, coastal resilience and ocean observation, and the development of the [All Atlantic Coastal Resilience Hub](#) which provides a platform to exchange solutions and provide visibility to the communities and decision makers by providing easily understood and accessible information. Further discussion, through a high level panel, considered affordable, scalable technological solutions alongside indigenous knowledge and community-led approaches, highlighting the value of international partnerships and innovative funding. In order to progress, shared knowledge would need to be translated into coordinated, practical action. Building coastal resilience requires locally driven solutions, meaningful partnerships, and clear implementation pathways that deliver real benefits for people as well as ecosystems. Moving from discussion to action will be essential to achieving lasting, scalable impact.



Graphic harvest of the workshop discussion.

Side event on “G20 Ocean20: Progressing from Dialogue to Action beyond 2030”

United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3), 9 June 2025 - Nice, France

The Ocean20 hosted a side event at the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) held in Nice, France. The objective of the session was to highlight the progress made through the Brazilian and South African Ocean20 initiatives, gain traction in terms of Ocean Actions with high level delegates to the UNOC-3 and engage with G20 countries attending the event. The opening remarks featured three distinguished speakers. Dr. Dion George, Minister for the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries in South Africa, welcomed delegates and noted South Africa's deep connection to the ocean and the country's ongoing commitment to sustainable ocean economy initiatives. Minister George was followed by Ms. Sanda Ojiambo, CEO and Executive Director of the UNGC and Assistant Secretary-General of the United

Nations. She commended Ocean20 for amplifying African leadership for the ocean, progressing ocean actions through reporting and accountability, and highlighting the important role that blue finance mechanisms can play in the sustainable use of ocean resources. Final remarks were provided by Ms. Zandile Ndhlovu, Founder and Director of the Black Mermaid Foundation, who provided an incredibly inspiring perspective by painting a picture of life as a young African woman connecting to the ocean. She shared her work engaging with the ocean's power and training young minds to connect with and look after the ocean as part of their legacy, which resonated deeply with the audience.

The event continued with an overview of Ocean20, a panel discussion featuring representatives from youth, academia, conservation, innovation and business, and the launch of new initiatives including the AAORIA intergenerational dialogue and the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS). Throughout the event, the African philosophy of Ubuntu served as a guiding principle, emphasising collaborative action for ocean sustainability.



Speakers and panellists at the side-event.

Side event on 'Building Bridges Through Generational Dialogue'

Southern African Marine Science Symposium, 10 September 2025 - Cape Town, South Africa

The Intergenerational Dialogue, held in partnership with Women20, created a platform for students, early-career researchers and more experienced professionals to engage meaningfully with fellow marine scientists through an interactive breakout session, and a fireside chat. Discussions emphasised that success in academic and early career pathways depends less on formal qualifications and more on personal skills, support systems, and mindset. This highlighted the importance of self-awareness, adaptability, communication, networking, and the willingness to take risks and “fail forward.” A key participant point was that mentorship, whether formal or informal, plays a critical role in building confidence, sustaining

motivation, and shaping career decisions, especially in moments of uncertainty. The workshop's success and high level of participation effectively reinforced that mentorship is collaborative, flexible, and grounded in shared interests rather than hierarchy, offering early-career researchers a supportive space to gain visibility, guidance, and opportunities.



Participants of the side-event discussing their research journey; Panelists of the fireside chat.

Workshop on “Innovative and Accessible Technologies & Models”

¹South African Marine Science Symposium (SAMSS), 10 September 2025 - Cape Town, South Africa

²Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) Symposium, 3 October 2025 - Mombasa, Kenya

Ocean observations are essential for informed and effective ocean management. However, traditional research tools are often expensive, require technical expertise to use, and are usually accessible only to well-funded institutions. By making these technologies more affordable and user-friendly, we can bridge this gap by reducing costs, simplifying their use, and expanding participation through community-driven initiatives, engaging small research institutions, and organisations in developing regions. This full-day interactive workshop demonstrated how to access global and regional ocean datasets, use cost-effective technologies for data collection, and apply these data in open-access modelling systems. The initial success of the first workshop at SAMSS¹ was effectively replicated at WIOMSA² later in the year.



Presenters at the workshop in Mombasa, Kenya.

Side event on “Advancing Inclusion of the Global South in the Earth Sciences community: Update on recent initiatives by the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) to enhance engagement in the Western Indian Ocean region”

Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association(WIOMSA) Symposium, 2 October 2025 - Mombasa, Kenya

This session was conceptualised under NRF-SAEON’s initiative as a My Climate Risk (MCR) Hub, in collaboration with the MCR Hubs hosted by the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina and the IGAD-ICPAC. Kenya. The session began with a keynote presentation that framed recent initiatives by the World Climate Research Programme and its vision for a climate resilient present and sustainable future. The WCRP’s efforts include the Regional Information for Society (RIfS) core project which strengthens the flow of climate relevant information between society, researchers and decision-makers, supported by an Africa Task Team who address region-specific challenges. The Global South Inclusion Task Team (GSiTT) further works to give equal priority and visibility to global south scientists and identifying barriers to participation such as technological capacity, human capacity, unequal access to knowledge networks, funding limitations and brain drain. These reflections prompt consideration of the same challenges within the Western Indian Ocean Region and solutions that could be considered to strengthen global engagement. The panel discussion that followed, echoed similar concerns and additionally highlighted persistent barriers such as uneven policy influence, "parachute science," and restrictions on data ownership and access. To address these issues within current structures and emerging initiatives, the panel emphasised the need to prioritise co-production, capacity development, and the recognition of regional expertise.



Presenter and panellist at the special session in Mombasa, Kenya.

9. G20 Social Summit



Ocean20 Co-Lead, Dr Tammy Morris with the President of South Africa and fellow G20 Engagement Group leads.

The G20 Social Summit, held on the 18-20 November 2025 in Johannesburg, formed a pivotal platform to promote the inclusion of civil society in the broader G20 agenda. Delegates attended from across social engagement groups, including national and international representatives from

civil society, youth, children, and business. These partners actively helped to shape policy outcomes for the country through working discussions to ensure that the concerns of the people were accurately captured. Building on the success of the Ocean20 Summit, the Ocean20 contributed to this collective effort by again hosting a “Future Thinking and Seeds Workshop” side event. Participants were tasked with creating a concept for an ideal ocean and the “seeds” that would need to be planted in order to achieve this. Participants called for a 100% transparent ocean where local communities play an active role in protecting it with a strong focus on accountability and responsibility. An Ocean20 display was also set up in the exhibition area, providing an opportunity for direct engagement with summit delegates.

The O20 lead coordinators played a vital role in providing strategic input into the G20 Social Summit Declaration, especially in leading discussions for the specific thematic areas of ‘Climate Resilience and Just Energy Transition’ and ‘Building Momentum for the achievement of the SDGs’, as well as leading the final consolidation session. The resulting recommendations from these discussions were presented to the President of South Africa for consideration at the leaders summit.

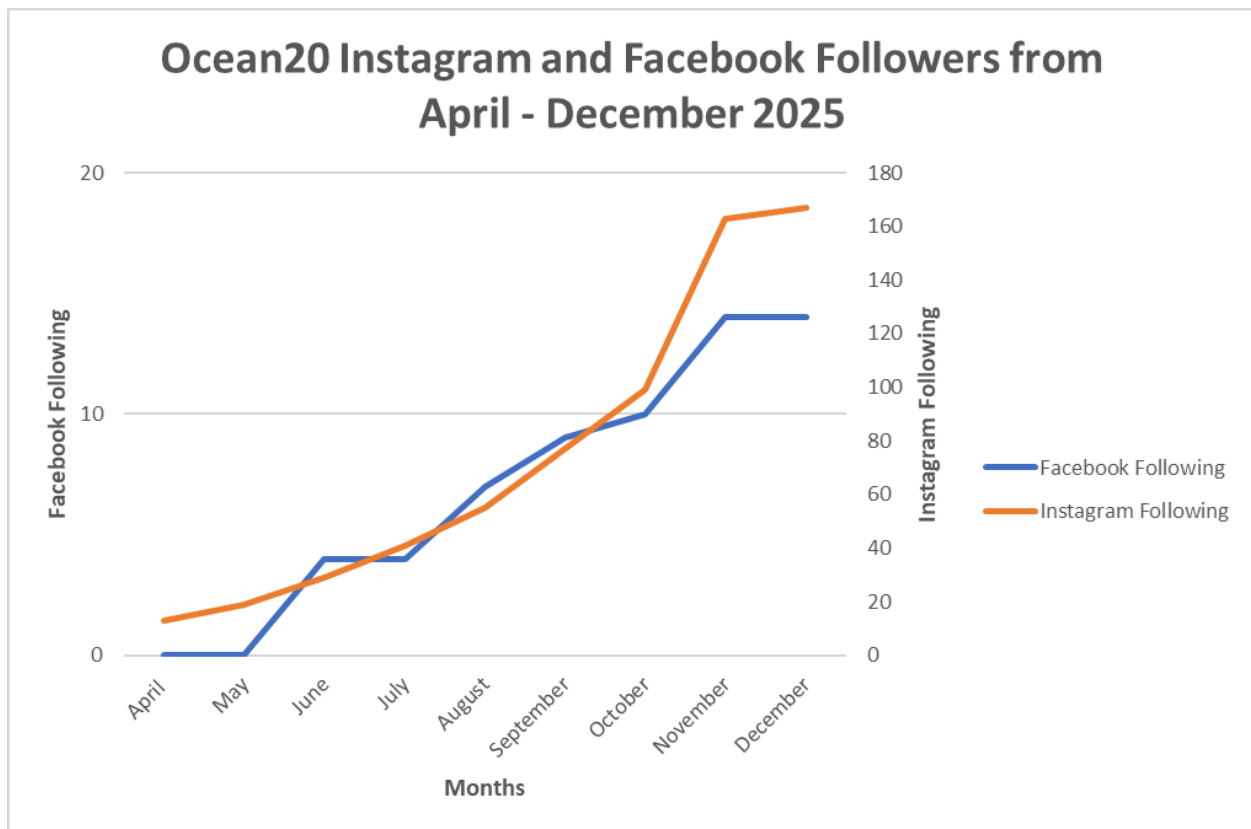
The summit highlighted that governance cannot exist without values and reaffirmed that the interests of developing countries are increasingly being elevated on the G20 agenda. The summit positioned Africa not only as a contributor but a leading voice in shaping global priorities.

10. Communication and Media Reach

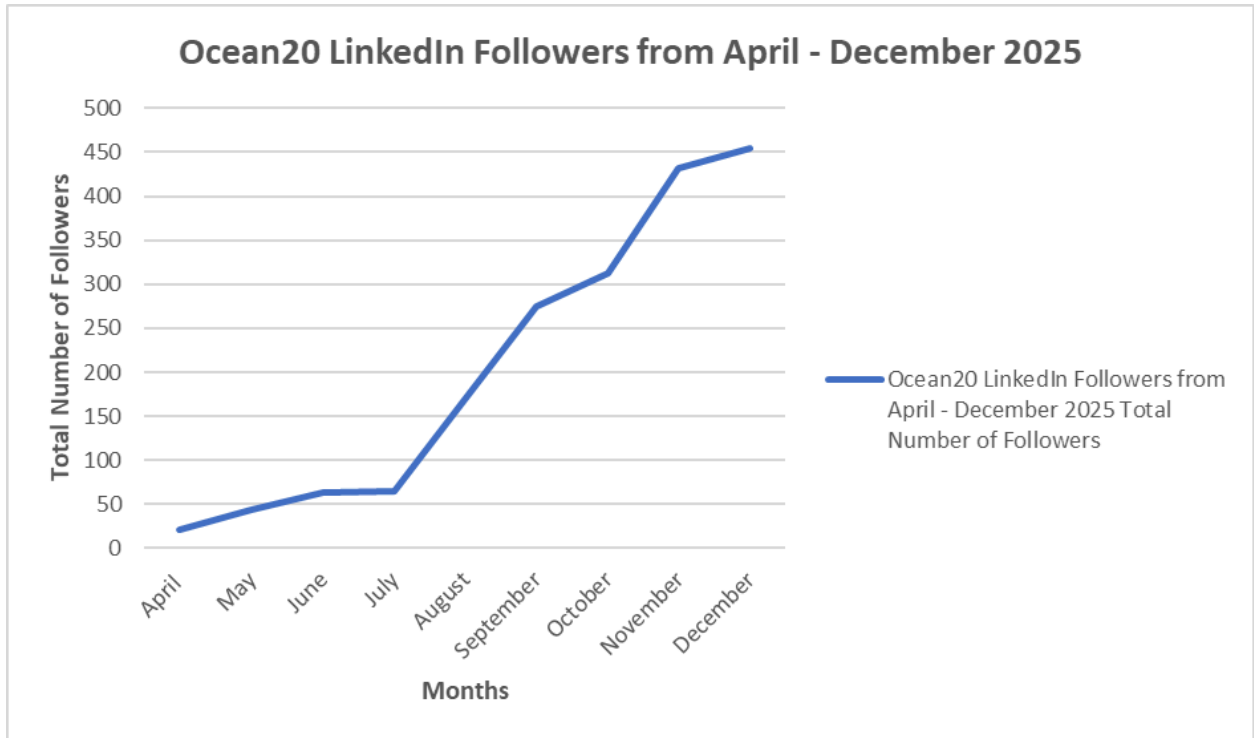
A key objective for Ocean20SA was to leverage social media and a dedicated webpage to facilitate outreach of activities and outputs to the broader public. This was a dedicated function within the team.

Across LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook, and X (formerly known as Twitter), Ocean20SA achieved steady, organically driven audience growth, with LinkedIn showing the most consistent engagement across a wide range of professional demographics.

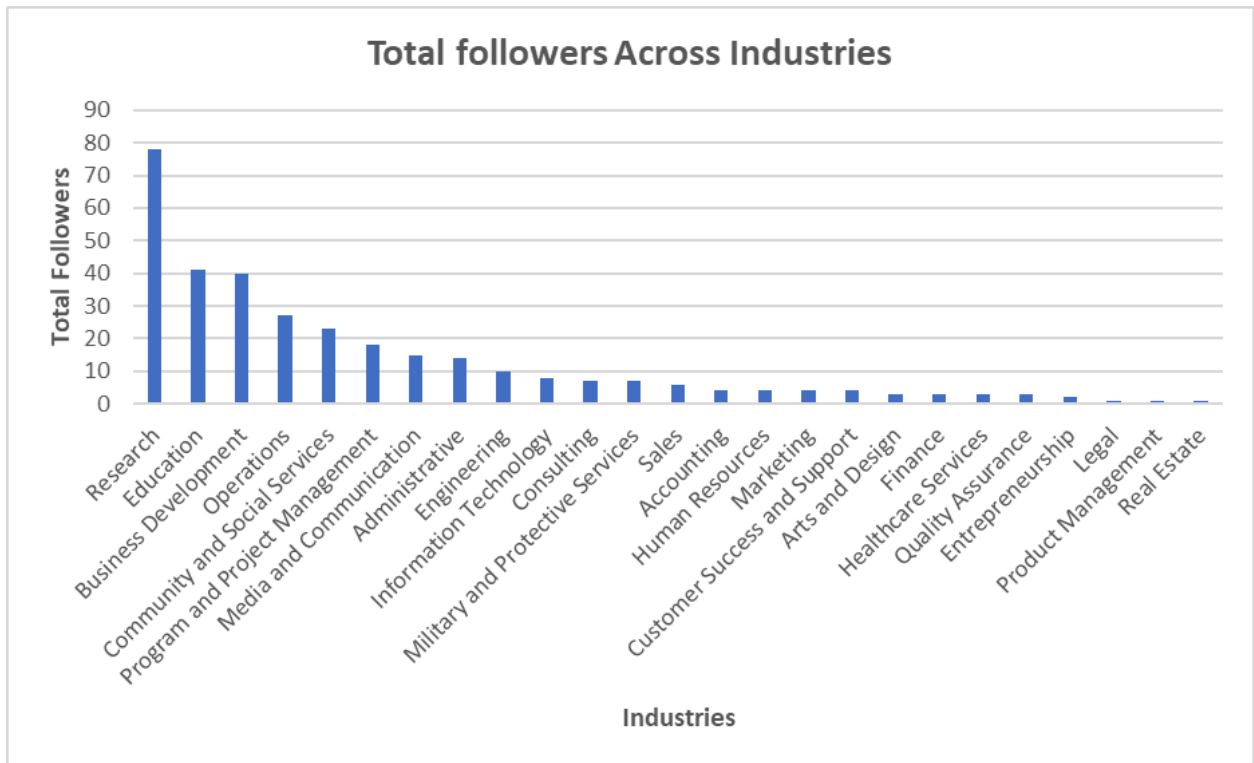
The [Ocean20 South Africa website](#) (hosted by NRF-SAEON: Egagasini Node), functioned as the primary information gateway for stakeholders, offering consolidated access to event [reports](#), [briefing notes](#), [newsletters](#), media assets, and programme updates. The site ensured that all resources were public, discoverable, and aligned with the broader outreach strategy across social media platforms.



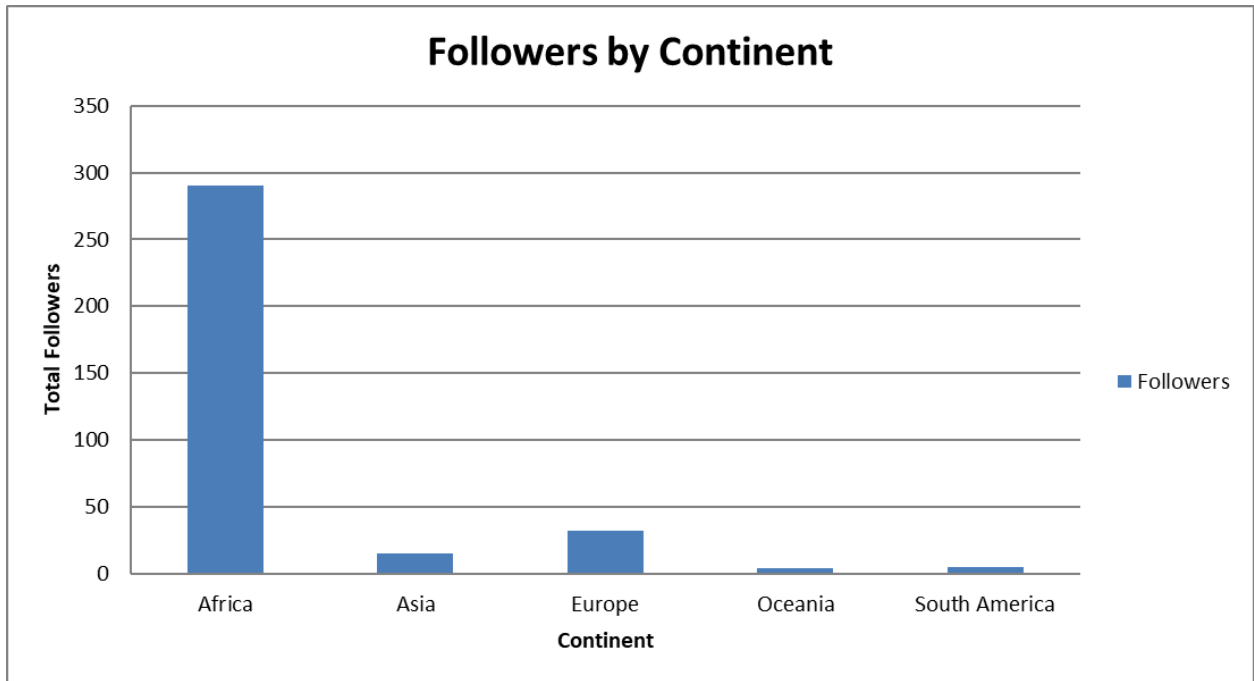
Ocean20 Instagram and Facebook Follower Growth since the launch in April 2025 until December 2025.



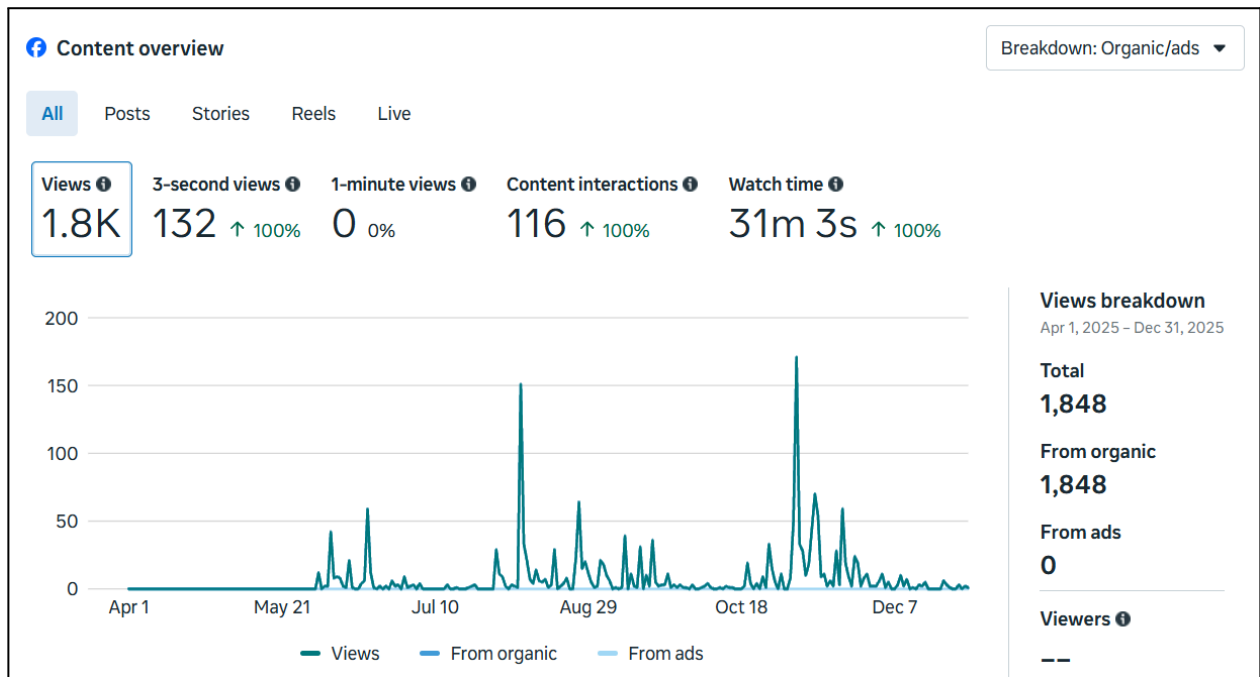
Ocean20 LinkedIn Follower Growth since the launch in April 2025 until December 2025.



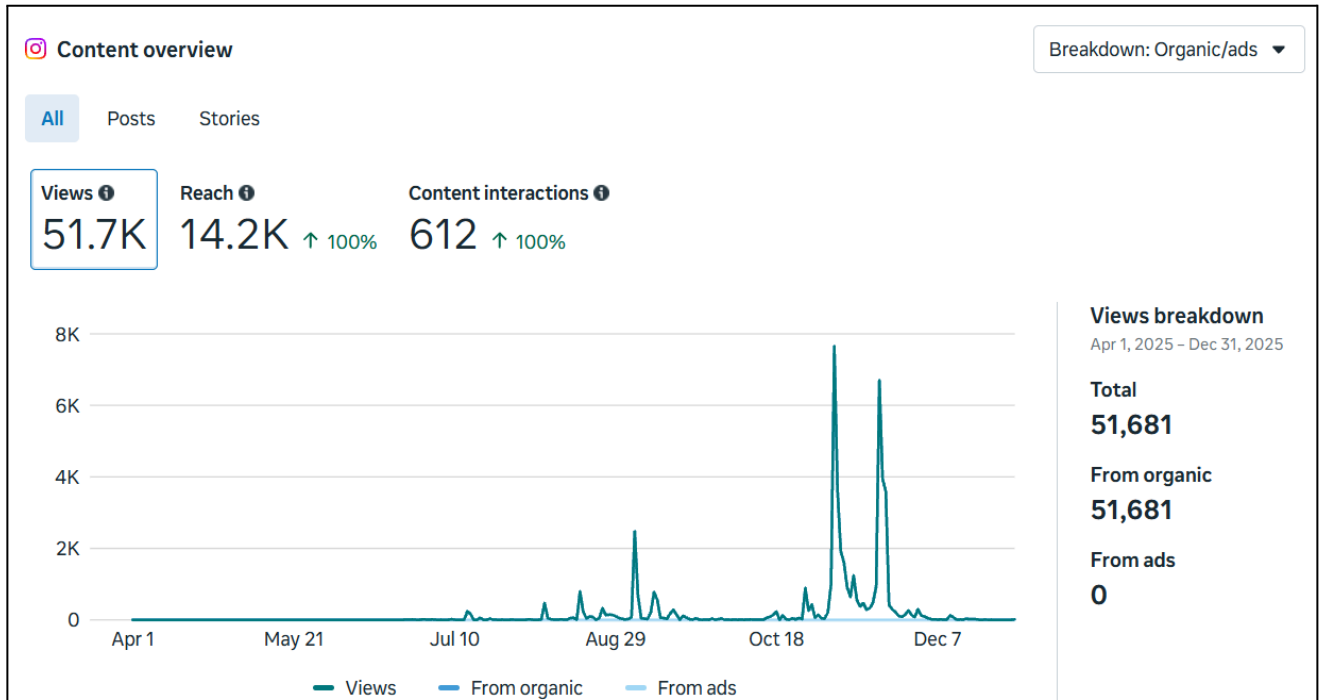
Ocean20 LinkedIn followers across various industries.



Ocean20 LinkedIn followers per continent.



Overall insights of the Ocean20 South Africa Facebook Page.



Overall insights of the Ocean20 South Africa Instagram account.

Highlights

Data for 4/1/2025 - 12/31/2025

24,238
Impressions

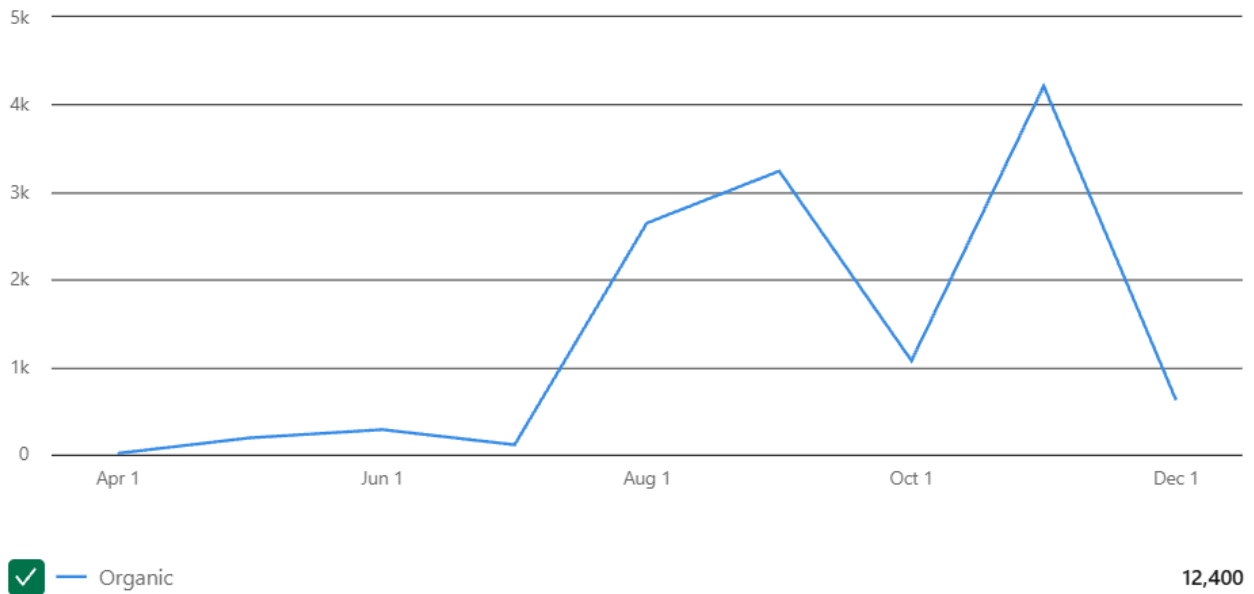
824
Reactions

8
Comments

19
Reposts

Metrics

Members reached ▾



Overall insights of the Ocean20 South Africa LinkedIn Page.

11. Briefing Notes

The following Ocean20 policy documents were developed under South Africa's 2025 Chairship to support evidence-based decision-making and advance an inclusive, sustainable, and equity-driven ocean agenda within the G20. A preliminary policy statement was presented to the G20 Sherpas when the Engagement groups were invited to present during the 3rd Sherpa Meeting in June. The Sherpa Briefing Note, together with the Ocean20 Communiqué, nine thematic briefing notes, and the joint Women20/Ocean20 Policy Brief present key insights, recommendations, and priority actions drawn from national consultations, expert engagements, and stakeholder dialogues held throughout the year. These resources are intended to guide policymakers, partners, and practitioners in strengthening ocean governance and supporting the transition to a just and resilient blue economy.

Ocean20 Policy Documents

- [Ocean20 Communiqué](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 1: [Energy Security and the Ocean](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 2: [Financing the Sustainable Ocean Economy](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 3: [Enhancing Global Economic Security and Prosperity by building on the Maritime Transition](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 4: [A Global Governance Framework for Ocean-Based Carbon Dioxide Removal \(mCDR\)](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 5: [Effective Ocean Communication and Connectivity](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 6: [Blue Foods](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 7: [Accessible Ocean Observing Technologies](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 8: [Deep-sea Mining - Why a Precautionary Pause is Needed](#)
- Ocean20 Briefing Note 9: [Freshwater Flowing into the Ocean is not Wasted](#)
- Women20 / Ocean20 Joint Policy Brief: [Empowering Women in Small-Scale Aquaculture and Fisheries for Resilient Food Systems](#)
- [Recommendations of the Ocean20 Engagement Group to the G20 Sherpas, 3rd Sherpa Meeting](#)

12. All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Series



Ocean20South Africa collaborated with the Atlantic International Research (AIR) Centre and the UNESCO Chair for Ocean Sustainability at the University of São Paulo (a partner in Brazil's Oceans20 leadership) to host a series of webinars. The aim of the All-Atlantic Connect Ocean20 webinars was to bring together experts, from South Africa and Brazil, active in different disciplines to share insights and foster a productive dialogue focused on the Oceans20 Communiqué's ten priority themes and discuss how this could be actioned through the continued momentum of the South African G20 presidency.

While initially intended to run throughout the year, due to operational challenges, the webinars were held over two months, October and November, at the end of the year.

Webinar Facilitator: Ms. Tânia Li Chen, AIR Centre

Session 1: All-Atlantic Webinar series Launch with O20 Brasil and O20 South Africa (21 Oct, 2025)

Introduction to the Ocean(s) 20 outcomes during the presidencies of Brazil and South Africa.

Presenters

Tammy Morris, NRF-SAEON

Alexander Turra, University of São Paulo

Moderator: Ms Laura McDonagh, Irish Marine Institute/OKEANO Project Manager

Watch All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Session 1 [here](#)

Session 2: Ocean Economy, Finance & Partnerships (Nov 6, 2025)

Focused on sustainable blue economy, financing, and cross-sectoral partnerships.

Panellists

Thauan Santos, Naval War College Brazil

Senia Nhamo, UNISA

Klaas de Vos, Ocean Fox Advisory

Luiz Pazos, Development Bank (BNDES)

Alexis Grosskopf, OceanHub Africa

Watch All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Session 2 [here](#)

Session 3: Climate, Energy & Social Inclusion (Nov 11, 2025)

Explored net-zero ocean economies and inclusive, just energy transitions.

Panellists

Yanga Malotana, University of Pretoria

Vishal Surban, University of Kwazulu Natal

Watch All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Session 3 [here](#)

Session 4: Governance & Policy Coherence (Dec 4, 2025)

Examined how inclusive governance empowers coastal communities and supports policy alignment.

Panellists

Leticia Grimett, South African International Maritime Institute

Stacey Webb, Sustainable Seas Trust

Watch All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Session 4 [here](#)

Session 5: Science, Innovation, and Cooperation (Dec 11, 2025)

Final session focusing on the role of scientific advancements and international cooperation in ocean research.

Presenter

Ken Findlay, Afriseas Solution

Panellists

Ken Findlay, Afriseas Solution

Tammy Morris, NRF-SAEON

Nicole du Plessis, NRF-SAEON

Watch All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Session 5 [here](#)

13. Key achievements/outcomes

- Community outreach and civil society engagement: A key highlight was the hosting of community engagement events. This allowed O20SA the opportunity to not only engage with academic, policymakers and business, but also civil society. The participation of the Minister of STI at the event in Mbombela led to the Minister discussing the importance of the ocean on national television.
- International stakeholders and an expanded stakeholder base: O20SA managed to secure international participation at relevant meetings, and gain support and interest from stakeholders in the G20. Building on the stakeholder database from Brazil, the O20SA grew the stakeholder database.
- Roles undertaken during the G20 Social Summit: O20SA co-leads were active in the planning of the G20 Social Summit, leading to key leadership roles during the summit.

14. Lessons learned

- Continuity: A challenge identified by the other engagement groups was around continuity of activities between presidencies. This meant that support for recommendations between presidencies was not maintained and progress was therefore slow. The precedent has been set for the Ocean20 coordination to rotate to national institutions according to successive G20 presidencies. This is the format followed by all other Engagement Groups, except Urban20 which is permanently convened by C40 Cities and the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), with leadership rotating annually among 1-2 Chair cities from the G20 host country. As Ocean20 is a new group, the Troika format should be maintained to ensure incoming chairs make input to work plans and are able to identify synergistic topics during their year of leadership. Involving the incoming chair will also allow them to contribute to relevant priorities of the current chair and consider their structure and planning for the following year.
- Government engagement: Due to South Africa's government G20 structure, Ocean20 was under the responsibility of the DSTI (responsible for the RIWG) and DIRCO (responsible as national focal point) as primary contacts. Under previous chairs Ocean20 engaged with the ministry responsible for the environment (Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group). This focus does impact the priority areas of the Ocean20 Chair. While Ocean20 national teams are still small, and due to the limited timeframe, it is important for incoming chairs to identify key national ministries and intergovernmental platforms to engage with for greatest impact prior to assuming chairship. As national stakeholders grow in subsequent presidencies, it may be possible to collaborate for greater government-level outreach. During this growth phase, collaboration with other Engagement Groups will continue to be important to raise awareness of Ocean20 within civil society and government.
- Social Engagement Groups: Interacting and collaborating with other engagement groups is an important way to broaden outreach, increase visibility and expand the stakeholder network.
- International Stakeholders and Stakeholder Continuity: Growing the stakeholder community for Ocean20 should be a key priority for successive presidencies. Currently, not all G20 countries

are represented in Ocean20, or have an institution designated as a country focal point. Depending on the Member State, the O20 focal point may be a national institution designated by the Government, invited by the government, or self-nominated to engage in the Ocean20 on behalf of civil society.

- **Policy Document Development:** A key consideration at the start of each presidency must be the intended policy outputs for the year, and the mechanisms for this. O20SA had not intended to develop policy briefs/notes under Ocean20, intending to develop a communique/joint statement from the outputs of the various stakeholder engagements. However, there was strong interest from stakeholders to contribute in this way. While this did enrich the Ocean20 programme, the coordination of the policy notes within a limited timeframe, as managed by the Ocean20 co-leads, was a challenge. Other options are to contribute to ocean policy through the established calls for policy briefs, e.g., under Think20 or Women20.
- **Ocean Actions:** O20SA launched a call for Ocean Actions as a way forward in the implementation of the recommendations of the Brazilian Oceans20 Communique, which had provided very practical themes and recommendations for supporting ocean sustainability and economic development. It was however challenging to promote visibility of the submitted Ocean Actions and identify whether there was meaningful interest from stakeholders to engage in the various projects. O20SA will continue to find avenues to support visibility of the Ocean Actions submitted during 2025. Incoming chairs should consider how best to implement and highlight existing recommendations as part of the G20 agenda.
- **Policy uptake:** Despite the efforts of the O20SA coordination team to have explicit mention of the ocean, and ocean recommendations, within the G20 Leader's Declaration, it was not mentioned. Language around the ocean was also limited within the Social Summit Declaration. This highlights that there is still much to be done to ensure the oceans value to human wellbeing and as an economic driver is recognised by all G20 leaders.

15. Conclusion

The Ocean20 South Africa 2025 Chairship successfully advanced the mandate of making the ocean visible within the G20 agenda, building on the momentum of previous presidencies. Through a dedicated focus on inclusivity, science-policy linkages, and engagement across the African continent, Ocean20SA achieved significant milestones. From the official launch in April to the culminating Ocean20 Summit and the strategic input into the G20 Social Summit, the year was defined by a shared commitment to a sustainable and equitable blue future. The "Taking the Oceans Inland" initiative, exemplified by the Mbombela community engagement, successfully broadened the stakeholder base and reinforced the critical connection between inland communities and ocean health — a powerful, regionally resonant achievement.

The development of the Ocean20 Communiqué and the suite of ten policy notes/briefs, developed in collaboration with a diverse range of experts, provides a robust, evidence-based foundation for future G20 ocean priorities. Furthermore, the collaborative spirit demonstrated

through joint initiatives with Women20, Science20, and the All-Atlantic Connect Webinar Series successfully amplified the message and broadened the network's reach.

However, the journey also underscored persistent challenges, notably around continuity between successive G20 presidencies and securing explicit inclusion of ocean language in the final G20 Leaders' and Social Summit Declarations. These challenges highlight the continuing need for persistent advocacy and the strategic embedding of the Ocean20 priorities within both G20 government structures and global policy platforms.

Looking forward, the successful handover to the United States Chairship ensures the initiative's continuity. The groundwork laid by South Africa — deepening engagement, strengthening science-policy links, and successfully demonstrating the importance of diverse, inclusive participation — sets a strong trajectory for Ocean20 to evolve from an emerging "ocean town hall" to an indispensable, impactful platform for global ocean governance and economic development. The real measure of success will be the continued commitment of the Ocean20 community to translate these insights and recommendations into tangible, long-term "Ocean Actions" that benefit coastal and inland communities alike.

16. Abbreviations:

AAORIA – All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance
AIR – Atlantic International Research Centre
AUDA-NEPAD – African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa’s Development
CORDAP – Coral Research and Development Accelerator Platform
CSA – Coordination and Support Action
DSTI – Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (South Africa)
ECON-SA – Early Career Ocean Professionals South Africa
G20 – Group of Twenty
GSiTT – Global South Inclusion Task Team
HSRC – Human Sciences Research Council
ICSHMO – International Conference on Southern Hemisphere Meteorology and Oceanography
IGAD-ICPAC – Intergovernmental Authority on Development – IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
INPO – Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Oceanográficas (Brazil National Oceanographic Research Institute)
IPOS – International Platform for Ocean Sustainability
MCR – My Climate Risk
mCDR – Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal
NRF – National Research Foundation (South Africa)
NRF-SAEON – National Research Foundation – South African Environmental Observation Network
O20 – Ocean20
OKEANO – OKEANO Coordination and Support Action
RIWG – Research and Innovation Working Group
RiS – Regional Information for Society
SAIIA – South African Institute of International Affairs
SAMREF – South African Marine Research Exploration Forum
SAMSS – South African Marine Science Symposium
SANBI – South African National Biodiversity Institute
SANWFA – South African National Women in Fisheries & Aquaculture
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
STI – Science, Technology and Innovation
T20 – Think20
UN – United Nations
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNGC – United Nations Global Compact
UNISA – University of South Africa
UNOC-3 – Third United Nations Ocean Conference
USP – University of São Paulo
W20 – Women20
WAVE – WAVE Programme (Saudi Arabia)
WHOI – Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
WIOMSA – Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
WCRP – World Climate Research Programme
Y20 – Youth20