

# 10<sup>th</sup> OUR OCEAN CONFERENCE

## OUR OCEAN, OUR ACTION

BUSAN, KOREA, APRIL 28-30, 2025

## Summary of Outcomes

### 1. Overview and Key Achievements

- ✓ **Date & Venue:** April 28–30, 2025, Busan BEXCO, Republic of Korea
- ✓ **Theme:** “Our Ocean, Our Action”
- ✓ **Participants:** Over 3,300 attendees from 113 countries, 17 IGOs and numerous NGOs
- ✓ **Commitments:** 277 voluntary commitments (USD 9.1 billion)

Action Area	Number of Commitments	Total Value (USD)
Ocean Climate Nexus	61	862,009,863
Marine Pollution	43	419,893,229
Marine Protected Area	46	117,823,138
Sustainable Blue Economy	59	6,041,322,572
Sustainable Fisheries	51	1,145,036,026
Maritime Security	15	504,381,792
Future OOCs	2	50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>9,090,516,620</b>

\* Note: Commitments were made by 60 different countries and organizations. figures as of April. 29. 2025

### 2. Korea Blue Action Plan: 76 national pledges by Republic of Korea

#### ✓ 4 Key Commitments:

- Korea will actively participate in discussions for marine protected areas (MPAs) worldwide.
- Korea will actively engage in discussions on the transition to eco-friendly fuels in shipping and the establishment of a global green fuel supply chain.
- Korea recognizes the importance of the global charter for fisheries transparency and will continue its efforts for phased implementation.
- Korea will implement full lifecycle management of fishing gear to address one of the most serious issues of marine plastic pollution.

### 3. 10th Anniversary Special Session: Commitment review

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#### ✓ Reviewed 10 years of OOC achievements and best practices

- Total since inception: 2,618 commitments by 478 organizations, valued at approx. USD 161 billion
- 43% implemented (1,130), 38% ongoing (1,005). 18% pending (483)
- Key focus areas: ▲ (Number) Marine pollution 508 commitments,  
▲ (Value) Climate change USD 86.6 billion (54% of total)

### 4. Plenary Session (7 Core Agendas)

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#### Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

- The session emphasized that Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are essential instruments for conserving marine biodiversity. Opportunities for new MPAs in Antarctica and the Arctic were highlighted.
- Panel members shared concerns over 'paper parks' and emphasized the urgency of expanding MPAs through both quantitative growth and qualitative improvements to build representative and interconnected networks aligned with global frameworks and initiatives.

#### Blue Economy

- The session emphasized that the Blue Economy must evolve beyond traditional growth models toward sustainability, regeneration, and resilience. Speakers highlighted the importance of redefining the Blue Economy by integrating ocean health, inclusive governance, and climate resilience into economic development strategies.
- Panel members stressed the urgent need for science-based governance, financial shifts towards nature-positive investments, breaking industry silos, fostering young leadership, and a strong collective commitment towards building a resilient and regenerative ocean economy.

#### Climate Change

- The session highlighted the ocean's critical role in climate regulation, emphasizing both its vulnerability and its potential as a solution to climate change. Speakers stressed the ocean's diminishing capacity to absorb carbon dioxide and heat due to ongoing environmental stress, requiring immediate global action.
- Discussions highlighted clear scientific evidence, practical technologies, and existing financial tools, stressing that decisive political leadership and active public engagement are essential.

#### Sustainable Fisheries

- The session addressed the escalating threat posed by illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and emphasized a holistic approach to sustainable fisheries governance. Speakers from government, regional organizations, civil society, and the business sector shared insights into policy reform, enforcement, traceability, and the deployment of technology.
- The plenary session underscored the global urgency to end IUU fishing through collective enforcement, innovation, and transparency. With new digital tools, policy instruments, and shared political will, the session called for seamless cooperation across sectors and jurisdictions to protect ocean resources and secure livelihoods for future generations.

### Marine Pollution

- The session called for coordinated global action with defined responsibilities, substantial financial support, and strong political commitment. The upcoming Global Plastics Treaty negotiations represent a pivotal moment to embed these elements into binding international agreements, ensuring lasting impacts on ocean health and sustainability.
- Key strategies proposed included lifecycle-based management covering plastic production through disposal, significant reductions in single-use plastics, and increased local community involvement, particularly through youth-driven initiatives like organized beach cleanups. The establishment of an independent, unbiased scientific advisory body was strongly recommended to guide treaty implementation and ensure scientifically informed decisions.

### Maritime Security

- The session highlighted the importance of upholding international law through UNCLOS, capacity-building, and targeted assistance. Real-world accounts revealed the toll of piracy and unsafe routes on seafarer welfare and global supply chains. A stable, rules-based order at sea and enhanced route safety are essential to ensure sustainable ocean governance, maritime security, and global economic stability.
- Speakers emphasized that legacy legal frameworks for protecting submarine cables and pipelines required renewed international cooperation. Addressing these issues is vital to maintaining stability at sea and safeguarding critical maritime infrastructure.

### Digital Oceans (Special Agenda by Korea)

- Speakers emphasized the central importance of data-driven decision-making and digital technologies for strengthening marine governance and climate resilience. From AI-powered forecasting models to autonomous maritime navigation and high-resolution satellite sensing, these innovations are enhancing environmental monitoring, disaster preparedness, and resource management while optimizing efficiency across sectors like shipping, fisheries, and urban development.
- The consistent message was that effective climate adaptation depends on accurate, integrated, and transparent data systems, with speakers highlighting the critical need for clear communication about how algorithms function, what data is collected, and how information informs decisions.

## 5. Business Summits and Exhibitions

### ✓ Shipping & Shipbuilding Business Summit (Apr 29):

A high-level summit on carbon neutrality and innovation in the shipping sector.

- Attended by government representatives, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), and global business leaders including HD Hyundai, Hanwha Ocean, HMM, PAN Ocean, Korean Register (KR), and the Korea Shipowners' Association (KSA).
- Discussions focused on the shipping industry's carbon-neutral strategy and a roadmap for eco-friendly shipbuilding technologies.

### ✓ Digital Ocean Business Summit (Apr 30):

A forum to explore digital innovations for sustainable ocean management.

- Participated by representatives from governments, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), Busan Port Authority (BPA), Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), and leading technology companies, such as CYTUR.

- Topics included the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and satellite data for tracking illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, marine pollution monitoring, and strategies for closer policy–industry integration.

#### ✓ Exhibitions:

Interactive showcases featuring Korea’s leading technologies in the shipping, shipbuilding, and digital ocean sectors.

- Participating organizations included HD Hyundai, MRC, Korea Research Institute of Ships and Ocean Engineering (KRISO), Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), Busan Port Authority (BPA), Korean Register (KR), Korea Marine Safety Authority (KOMSA), and Korea Polar Research Institute (KOPRI).
- Highlights: ▲ HD Hyundai showcased models of a Very Large Ammonia Carrier (VLAC), a Floating Liquefied Natural Gas Storage and Regasification Unit (LNG–FSRU), and an autonomous ship simulator. ▲ KRISO exhibited an electric propulsion vehicle ferry and a mobile resource supply system.

## 6. Side Events

#### ✓ 74 events by 65 organizations

Action Areas	Number of Events	Action Areas	Number of Events
Marine Protected Areas	13	Sustainable Fisheries	11
Blue Economy	13	Maritime Security	3
Climate Change	14	Digital Oceans	12
Marine Pollution	8	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>

  

Host Type	Number of Hosts	Host Type	Number of Hosts
NGOs	24	Government	11
Academia & Research institutions	17	Private Sector	3
IGOs	12	<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>

#### ✓ Key Side Events Highlights

- A Side Event on Blue Finance, a financial initiative to promote a sustainable maritime economy, explored inclusive and innovative financing for increased investment in all aspects of the ocean, from ecosystem restoration to low–carbon energy transition.
- The High Seas Alliance organized a Side Event on the BBNJ Agreement and celebrated South Korea’s ratification, the first in East Asia and the twenty–first globally. The event advocated for the ratification of the treaty by at least 60 countries by the third UN Ocean Assembly in June of this year.
- The Ocean Satellite Accounts seminar shared cases of adopting ocean and fisheries satellite accounts by leading countries such as Portugal and Norway. The event discussed challenges and cooperation plans for the growth of the global ocean economy.
- A roadmap to establish the world’s first trans–Pacific green shipping route was announced. This route will connect the ports of Busan and Ulsan in South Korea with the ports of Seattle and Tacoma in the United States.

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