
Aide memoire

<i>Session</i>	Setting the stage – understanding where we are heading and what this implies
<i>Title of presentation</i>	World Ocean Assessment I – Findings on Biodiversity
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Abstract

The World Ocean Assessment I was conducted to inform the United Nations directly on the status and trends of the world’s oceans. Established by UNGA Resolution 64/71, it was charged to consider marine and coastal natural systems (physical, chemical and biological), human systems (economic and social uses of the oceans and coasts) and the relationships and interactions within and between them. Comprising over 60 Chapters and 1700 pages and completed in 2015, it was a comprehensive review of the status of the ocean and its uses, intended to serve as the initial benchmarks for a Regular Process for the Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, Including Socio-Economic Aspects. The brief presentation at the start of the Panel Session will summarize some of the main findings of WOA 1 and place those findings and assessment process into the evolving policy context for conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity

Key considerations (10 Main Themes of WOA I)

- Climate change – Pervasive; mechanisms generally understood, predictive ability weak
- Exploitation of Living resources – Widespread unsustainability, widespread successes
- Source of Food – Crucial regionally now, importance will increase in future
- Biodiversity – Pressures increasing, hotspots are magnets for human uses (services)
- Uses of Ocean Space – increasing number and conflicts, little strategic planning
- Pollution (incl nutrients) – Excessive many places and development will increase
- Cumulative Impacts – Increasing, weakly considered, strong non-linearities
- Distribution of benefits – Highly inequitable, and changes occurring both ways
- Solutions – More needed but existing ones have great implementation lags

Key discussion points and conclusions

- WOA far more encyclopedic but far less integrative within and across chapters
- Among assessments, what are trade-offs of breadth (WOA) and depth?
- What is right balance of filling knowledge gaps vs action implementation lags?
- What is right trade-off of addressing inequities of distribution of benefits vs reducing pressures on biodiversity and pollution (“The Package” of the BBNJ)