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Marine Policy Seminar

*The Centrality of Oceans and Seas for Sustainable Development: The Road to an SDG on Oceans and Seas*

Healthy, productive, and resilient oceans and seas, supporting human development, poverty eradication and economic growth while preserving essential ecological goods and services, are critical to all and therefore a universal agenda. Despite increasing efforts at international, regional, national, and sub-national levels, the health and well-being of oceans and seas have declined throughout the decades, compromising the many benefits and services that they provide to the global community. This presentation will underline the centrality of oceans and seas for sustainable development, discuss the state of discussions on sustainable development goals (SDGs) at the United Nations, and review suggestions for a stand-alone SDG on oceans and seas.

The implementation of an SDG on oceans and seas would provide a new impetus for the integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and overcoming deficits of sector-specific goals or approaches, which has been the main approach, thus far, to managing the oceans and seas. Through an SDG on oceans and seas, strategies that help eradicate poverty, sustain economic growth, enhance social inclusion, improve human welfare, and create job opportunities, while maintaining the healthy functioning of the oceans and seas, could be implemented. An SDG on oceans and seas would build on the Millennium Development Goals achievements by making healthy, productive, and resilient oceans and seas an explicit part of the world's sustainable development agenda.