

The Blue COP:

A Moment of Convergence and a Call for an Antalya Ocean Compact

COP31, the Blue COP, arrives at a defining moment for advancement of the global ocean agenda. Never have so many international processes aligned around the Ocean-Climate-Biodiversity Nexus. Together, the UNFCCC, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the BBNJ High Seas Agreement, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have provided an unprecedented opportunity for coordinated action.

The challenge is to align international institutions and agreements around an agenda that will ensure implementation of the key demands of the Ocean-Climate-Biodiversity Nexus. The Blue COP offers a rare chance to achieve that alignment. What is required is the adoption by the COP of a compact rooted in this convergence that ensures science informs policy, that policy mobilizes finance, and that finance accelerates implementation in pursuit of a healthy ocean, a stable climate, and a resilient future for the planet's biodiversity.

1 The Ocean Pavilion: Where Science Converges into Action

Now in its fifth year, the Ocean Pavilion has established itself as the lead platform for ocean issues in the Blue Zone. The Ocean Pavilion is where science, policy, finance, innovation, and leadership have converged to forge partnerships, mobilize investment, and translate commitments into implementation.

Ocean science provides the common language that connects climate, biodiversity, adaptation, mitigation, finance, and sustainable development through a shared evidence base. It enables better decisions, stronger partnerships, and more effective implementation.

This convergence depends fundamentally on sustained investment in ocean observations, forecasting, predictive capabilities, and open data systems. These are not simply scientific assets—they are the knowledge infrastructure upon which effective climate action, resilient economies, informed investment, and accountable implementation depend.

2 The Ocean Imperative

The scientific evidence has converged around a critical conclusion: Ocean warming, marine heatwaves, acidification, deoxygenation, pollution, and accelerating sea-level rise are reshaping marine ecosystems and threatening billions of people. As delegates gather at the Blue COP, an El Niño event expected to be one of the largest on record will add

further stress to a steadily warming planet, underscoring both the urgency of action and the central role of the ocean in regulating Earth's climate. The message is unmistakable: The ocean lies at the heart of the climate challenge, and science provides the common foundation for action.

Policy is beginning to converge with science. Of the 66 Nationally Determined Contributions submitted by coastal and island nations in 2025, 61 included at least one ocean-related measure. But just as governments increasingly recognize the ocean as indispensable to climate resilience, the observing system upon which these commitments depend is itself under threat. We know that ocean-based solutions could deliver a substantial share of the emissions reductions needed to achieve the Paris goals, but still we see that less than one percent of national research budgets on average worldwide are invested in ocean science.

The next phase of convergence must therefore be between scientific discovery and public investment. Ocean observations must be recognized not simply as research tools, but as critical global infrastructure for meeting the challenges facing the convergent systems governing Earth's ocean, climate, and biodiversity. Ocean observations of this critical nexus provide the knowledge needed to anticipate change, guide policy, mobilize finance, strengthen accountability, and build a resilient future for people and the planet.

3 From the Frontlines to the Front of Leadership

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) continue to demonstrate that those communities most vulnerable to climate change are among the strongest leaders of climate change action. Their priorities—keeping 1.5°C within reach, strengthening ocean observations, scaling finance, and accelerating ocean-based adaptation—are not competing objectives. They are in fact mutually reinforcing elements of a single resilience agenda for the planet as a whole.

The leadership provided by SIDS reminds us that challenges facing ocean health, climate stability, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development cannot be overcome independently. For SIDS, coastal communities, and the Blue COP host nation, Türkiye, convergence of the solutions to these challenges is not an abstract concept, it is an operational necessity and the foundation of a resilient future.

4 The Antalya Ocean Compact

Every successful COP leaves behind a defining legacy. Paris delivered a global climate agreement and recognized the role of the ocean in Earth's climate. Sharm El-Sheikh established the Loss and Damage Fund. Dubai committed the world to transition away from fossil fuels. The Antalya Blue COP should be remembered for a transformative approach to the ocean's place in humanity's future.

It is thus that COP31 should launch the Antalya Ocean Compact, committing governments, intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, and other key actors to align the implementation of climate, biodiversity, ocean, and sustainable development commitments through a single, integrated agenda for a healthy ocean, a stable climate, and a resilient future.

The Compact should accelerate and harmonize implementation across the UNFCCC, the Convention

on Biological Diversity, the BBNJ High Seas Agreement, and related international processes. It should stand firm for the maintenance and development of ocean observation capabilities as essential global infrastructure. The Compact should reinforce mobilization of finance at the scale that ocean action demands; and ensure that science, policy, and finance are working together to deliver measurable outcomes for people, planet, and sustainable prosperity.

5 A Shared Call to Action: One Ocean, One Climate, One Planet, One Future

The ocean's welfare connects every nation, every community, and every generation. We have but one ocean and one planet. The Blue COP must therefore align the planet's ocean, climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development agendas around a single implementation framework that protects the world we treasure.

The Ocean Pavilion partners further call upon governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, business, philanthropy, the scientific community, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth, and civil society to support and establish the Antalya Ocean Compact, by which all will:

- Recognize ocean observations and open data as essential global infrastructure
- Align the planning and implementation of ocean action across the UNFCCC, CBD, BBNJ, and related international processes
- Mobilize finance at the scale required to support the Ocean–Climate–Biodiversity Nexus
- Work to ensure that science informs policy, policy mobilizes finance, and finance delivers measurable outcomes for people, planet, and prosperity

The Antalya Ocean Compact is an invitation to work differently—to connect institutions rather than create new ones; to align investments rather than fragment resources; and to place ocean science at the center of climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development planning and action.

The science has converged. The institutions are converging. The partnerships are converging. Now, through the insistence of the Antalya Ocean Compact, implementation must converge around a singular truth:

We all share one ocean, one climate, one planet, and one future.