



The UN & You

BY TERESA KOTTURAN SCN – JUNE 2022

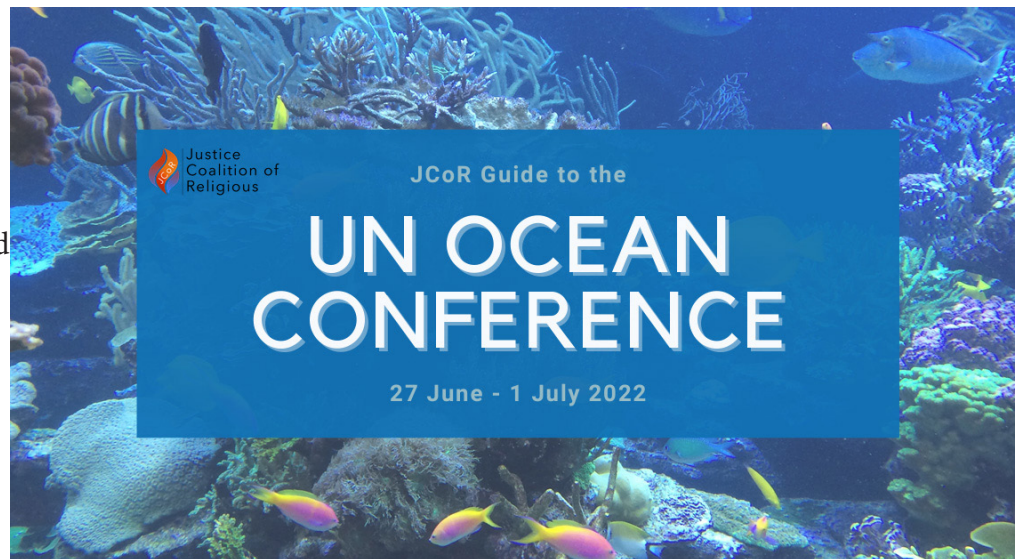
Save our ocean, protect our future

World leaders, scientists, the business community, change makers and civil society activists will be gathering in Lisbon, Portugal to from June 27–July 1, 2022 to deliberate on “scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation” to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.” (SDG14) Some of the targets are:

- Reduce marine pollution
- Protect and restore ecosystems
- Reduce ocean acidification
- Sustainable fishing – end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
- Conserve Coastal and Marine areas
- End subsidies contributing to overfishing
- Increase economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources
- Increase scientific knowledge, research and technology for ocean health
- Support small scale fishers
- Implement and enforce international laws

We, who live on land, depend on the ocean, the most diverse, important ecosystem, for our very existence: 50 percent of our oxygen comes from the ocean. The ocean absorbs 50 times more carbon dioxide than our atmosphere, helping to regulate global warming. The ocean covers 70 percent of the Earth’s surface and contains 97 percent of Earth’s water.

Over 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods; a vast majority of them are in the Global South. Oceans also provide food



—they are the primary source of protein for 3 billion people. Pollution and unmonitored fishing is threatening the source of their sustenance. Many communities have deep cultural and spiritual connections to the ocean. Indigenous peoples have put the sea at the center of community life.

Healthy oceans and seas are essential to our existence. In spite of our dependence on the ocean for food, energy, and water, we have exploited our ocean and damaged its precious resources. Because of its vastness, we thought the ocean is invincible and immune to human impacts. However, in reality, the ocean is in grave danger, its very chemistry is changing—ocean waters are becoming more acidified through climate change. There is an urgent need to protect all marine life and eliminate pollution, overfishing, seabed mining and all forms of human exploitation.

The health of the ocean is crucial to the health of the planet and its people; healthy oceans are key to tackling climate change. Each one of us has a responsibility to protect the ocean, even if we live thousands of miles

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away, for the sake of a sustainable future.

The [Second UN Ocean Conference](#) will play an important role in creating new pathways for ocean action based on science, technology and innovation. The conference will also highlight how nature-based solutions utilizing mangroves, salt marsh and seagrass can be used as mitigation measures.

Even though the Ocean Conference is taking place in Lisbon, Portugal, you can take part in the proceedings and become a change maker. The Justice Coalition of Religious (a coalition of 20 religious NGOs at the UN in New York) [has created a guide](#) to assist you to engage in the official meeting and side events organized by governments, NGOs and others. You can learn more about the Ocean Conference, how to join in events, and how to participate in social media advocacy.

Do take time to participate in the Ocean Conference. Each of us can take an action to make a difference.

*Teresa Kotturan, SCN
NGO Representative
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*Sustainable Oceans: The Road to Lisbon | The 2022
United Nations Ocean Conference*

UNEA 5.2 Flagship Hybrid side event

Panel discussion on the upcoming UN Ocean Conference and the transformative outcomes it seeks to achieve by highlighting the interlinkages and synergies between the Conference and the work being carried out in the context of UNEA.

Co-hosted by Governments of Kenya and Portugal. Video is in English. [Watch video](#)