



# General Assembly

Distr.: Limited  
28 May 2021

Original: English

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## United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea Twenty-first meeting 14 to 18 June 2021

### Format and annotated provisional agenda

1. In accordance with resolution [54/33](#), in which the General Assembly established the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, the two Co-Chairs appointed by the President of the Assembly will elaborate, in consultation with delegations, a format for the discussions at the Informal Consultative Process that best facilitates its work, in accordance with the rules of procedure and practices of the Assembly. It is recalled that the mandate of the Informal Consultative Process was extended by the Assembly for three-year periods in resolutions [57/141](#) and [60/30](#), for additional two-year periods in resolutions [63/111](#), [65/37](#) A, [67/78](#), [69/245](#), [71/257](#) and [73/124](#), and for one year in resolution [75/239](#).
2. On the basis of consultations with delegations, the Co-Chairs, Isabelle Picco (Monaco) and Viliami Va'inga Tone (Tonga) have developed a revised format and annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-first meeting of the Informal Consultative Process in order to accommodate a virtual meeting in light of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic (see annexes I and II).
3. The areas of concentration for the discussion panel on the theme "Sea level rise and its impacts" are intended to identify important issues that the discussion panel may wish to consider. They have also been revised and are reflected in annex III.
4. The Informal Consultative Process is invited to consider and adopt the provisional agenda.



## **Annex I**

### **Format for the twenty-first meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea**

#### **Methods of work**

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [54/33](#), the twenty-first meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea will work through plenary sessions and a discussion panel held virtually, in the light of uncertainties resulting from the continued impacts of COVID-19 on the holding of in-person meetings at Headquarters in New York, on the Interprefy platform.
2. The plenary sessions and discussion panel will be open to participation by all those listed in paragraph 3 (a) of resolution [54/33](#) and by representatives of major groups, as identified in section III of Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

#### **Agenda**

3. The Co-Chairs will propose a provisional agenda setting out a programme of work for the meeting and a timetable for the plenary sessions and the discussion panel. The provisional agenda will take into account paragraphs 344 to 347 and 352 of General Assembly resolution [74/19](#) and paragraph 352 of resolution [75/239](#). The Informal Consultative Process will consider and adopt its agenda and timetable accordingly at its twenty-first meeting.

#### **Discussion panel**

4. In paragraph 352 of its resolution [75/239](#), the General Assembly confirmed that the Informal Consultative Process would focus its discussions at its twenty-first meeting on the theme “Sea level rise and its impacts”. On the basis of their consultations with delegations, the Co-Chairs have proposed an outline for the theme to be considered by the discussion panel. The Co-Chairs intend to invite a limited number of panellists to submit short presentations on relevant aspects in the form of pre-recorded videos, which will be made available electronically in advance of the twenty-first meeting. The panellists will be available during live virtual sessions on the Interprefy platform for interactive discussions with delegations.

#### **Outcome of the twenty-first meeting**

5. The outcome will consist of a Co-Chairs’ summary of issues and ideas raised and discussed during the live plenary sessions or in writing. It will also reflect issues and ideas raised during the discussion panel. As in the past, the outcome will include issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the General Assembly on oceans and the law of the sea. Given the virtual format of the twenty-first meeting of the Informal Consultative Process, the advance and unedited text of the summary will be circulated electronically to delegations for factual corrections after the meeting. The summary will be for reference purposes only. The Co-Chairs will transmit the outcome of the meeting to the President of the General Assembly.

## Annex II

### **Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-first meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea\***

**Monday, 14 June 2021**

**10 a.m.–12 p.m.**

#### **First plenary session**

##### *Item 1. Opening of the twenty-first meeting*

1. The Co-Chairs will open the proceedings on the Interprefy platform.
2. The Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, or their designated representatives, will make opening remarks.

##### *Item 2. Adoption of the agenda*

3. The Informal Consultative Process is invited to consider and, as appropriate, to adopt the agenda of the twenty-first meeting.

##### *Item 3. General exchange of views*

4. It is suggested that the general exchange of views be conducted in writing. In their written statements, delegations may wish to address in particular the theme of the twenty-first meeting, “Sea level rise and its impacts”. Delegations will be invited to provide their general statements in writing, possibly 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Those statements will be made available electronically by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

#### **Discussion panel**

##### **Sea level rise and its impacts**

5. On the basis of areas of concentration for the discussion panel set forth in annex III, it is proposed that the discussion panel segments be organized as set out below. It is proposed that delegations view the panellists’ pre-recorded presentations made available electronically by the Division in advance of the meeting. Each live virtual panel segment will consist of discussions among delegations and panellists based on the pre-recorded presentations.

**Tuesday, 15 June 2021**

**10 a.m.–12 p.m.**

#### **Discussion panel**

##### *Segment 1*

*Sea level rise: understanding the issue, its impacts and related challenges*

Discussion.

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\* All sessions will begin promptly at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

**Wednesday, 16 June 2021**

**4–6 p.m.**

**Discussion panel**

*Segment 1 (continued)*

*Sea level rise: understanding the issue, its impacts and related challenges*

Discussion.

**Thursday, 17 June 2021**

**4–6 p.m.**

**Discussion panel**

*Segment 2*

*International cooperation and coordination in addressing the impacts and challenges related to sea level rise*

Discussion.

**Friday, 18 June 2021**

**10 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**Discussion panel**

*Segment 2 (continued)*

*International cooperation and coordination in addressing the impacts and challenges related to sea level rise*

Discussion.

**Second plenary session**

*Item 4. Inter-agency cooperation and coordination*

6. In accordance with the terms of reference for UN-Oceans adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [68/70](#), the United Nations Legal Counsel/Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as the UN-Oceans focal point, represents UN-Oceans at relevant meetings, including those under the Assembly. To ensure transparency and accountability, UN-Oceans, upon request from the Assembly, reports to Member States in the context of the meetings of the Informal Consultative Process. In that regard, and pending such request, the UN-Oceans focal point will be invited to submit a brief statement on the activities of UN-Oceans for comments by delegations in writing. In accordance with Assembly resolution [73/124](#), and as recalled in resolution [75/239](#), the review of the terms of reference of UN-Oceans was deferred to the seventy-sixth session of the Assembly.

*Item 5. Process for the selection of topics and panellists so as to facilitate the work of the General Assembly*

7. The Informal Consultative Process will consider the recommendation of the General Assembly in paragraph 352 of its resolution [73/124](#), that the Informal Consultative Process devise a transparent, objective and inclusive process for the selection of topics and panellists so as to facilitate the work of the Assembly during informal consultations concerning the annual resolution on oceans and the law of the sea. Delegations will be invited to submit general statements in writing, with a view to presenting specific proposals in that regard.

*Item 6. Issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the General Assembly on oceans and the law of the sea*

8. The Informal Consultative Process will be presented in writing with a composite streamlined list of issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the General Assembly, prepared by the Co-Chairs on the basis of the relevant section of the reports on the work of the Informal Consultative Process from its fourth to twentieth meetings ([A/58/95](#), [A/59/122](#), [A/60/99](#), [A/61/156](#), [A/62/169](#), [A/63/174](#), [A/63/174/Corr.1](#), [A/64/131](#), [A/65/164](#), [A/66/186](#), [A/67/120](#), [A/68/159](#), [A/69/90](#), [A/70/78](#), [A/71/204](#), [A/72/95](#), [A/73/124](#) and [A/74/119](#)). The Co-Chairs will inform the Informal Consultative Process of the additional issues that will have been suggested by delegations in writing during the twenty-first meeting for inclusion in the list of issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the Assembly.

*Item 7. Consideration of the outcome of the meeting*

9. The Informal Consultative Process will be provided with an opportunity to consider the outcome of the meeting. In accordance with the format for the meeting (see annex I), the outcome will consist of a Co-Chairs' summary of issues and ideas raised and discussed during the plenary sessions. It will also reflect issues and ideas raised during the discussion panel. In addition, the outcome will include issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the General Assembly on oceans and the law of the sea. The summary will be circulated electronically to delegations for reference purposes only, after the meeting.

## Annex III

### **Proposed areas of concentration for the discussion panel on the theme “Sea level rise and its impacts”**

#### **Information contained in the report of the Secretary-General**

1. The General Assembly confirmed, in resolution [75/239](#), that, in its deliberations on the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea would focus its discussions at its twenty-first meeting on the theme “Sea level rise and its impacts”. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea has made available on its website ([www.un.org/depts/los/consultative\\_process/consultative\\_process.htm](http://www.un.org/depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm)) the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea relating to the theme ([A/75/70](#)), for consideration by the Assembly at its seventy-sixth session.

#### **Discussion panel segments**

2. In considering the possible approaches for structuring the discussion panel segments in relation to the theme, it may be recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution [54/33](#), consistent with the framework provided by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and chapter 17 of Agenda 21, established the Informal Consultative Process to facilitate its annual review, in an effective and constructive manner, of developments in ocean affairs by considering the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea and by suggesting particular issues to be considered by it, with an emphasis on identifying areas where coordination and cooperation at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels should be enhanced. Furthermore, the Assembly, in its resolution [75/239](#), recognized the role of the Informal Consultative Process as a unique forum for comprehensive discussions on issues related to oceans and the law of the sea and that the perspective of the three pillars of sustainable development should be further enhanced in the examination of the selected topics. It also recognized the primary role of the Informal Consultative Process in integrating knowledge, the exchange of opinions among multiple stakeholders and coordination among competent agencies, and enhancing awareness of topics, including emerging issues, while promoting the three pillars of sustainable development.

3. In considering the theme, it is proposed that the respective panel segments concentrate their discussions on the following areas:

*(a) Sea level rise: understanding the issue, its impacts and related challenges*

4. The discussion panel segment could provide an overview of the issue of sea level rise, its impacts on all States, in particular low-lying coastal States and developing States, including least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as other vulnerable coastal communities and megacities, and the challenges it presents. It could also highlight the current state of knowledge on sea level rise and its impacts, including relevant environmental, social and economic impacts, both observed and projected.

5. Recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, could be considered. Throughout the panel segment, areas where additional information and capacity are needed could be highlighted.

(b) *International cooperation and coordination in addressing the impacts and challenges related to sea level rise*

6. The discussion panel segment could focus on current activities and initiatives being undertaken at the global, regional, subregional and national levels to advance the understanding of sea level rise and address its impacts, including those noted above, and profile best practices. Opportunities for enhancing cooperation and coordination at all levels could also be explored, including in particular in the context of ocean-related forums and processes, and other relevant processes. Information related to scientific, technical and technological aspects, as well as capacity-building and other sources of support, would be integrated throughout, with special consideration for the needs of developing States, including small island developing States and least developed countries, as well as other vulnerable communities. Efforts to address sea level rise under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and other relevant instruments could also be considered. The role of the private sector, as well as of local actors and leaders, could also be integrated into the discussions. The contribution of these discussions to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development could be addressed.

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