

Empowering the Decade Webinar on Horizon Europe Funding- 20260126_120022UTC-Meeting Recording

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Matt Frost 0:13

Hi everyone, just to note that this is Matt Frost. I'm chairing the meeting, but I'm going to give it another minute or so for people who no doubt will be jumping on from other meetings. So if you'd like to hang on for just a minute and then we'll start. Thank you. Okay, so normally I would leave it for a couple more minutes to let people join. We're on quite a tight schedule today, so I realise that there will be people still joining, but I am actually going to kick off. So welcome all.

My name is Matt Frost. I'm head of international work at Plymouth Marine Laboratory in the UK, but the hat I'm wearing specifically today is I chair the UK National Decade Committee. So this is going to be an information, it's an information session, but there will be a chance for some discussion and I'll come on to the agenda in a moment. Before we start, I just want to say a particular thank you to all our speakers. We've got a really fantastic international panel here and thank you also to our international partners who supported putting on this event, especially the National Decade Committees from Canada and Portugal. And I'd also like to thank, they don't know, I'm going to say this, but the UK Department for the Environment as well, Frances, and Thea and Caroline in particular, who've done a lot of work in organising this event. So thank you all. And without further ado, we'll move along and I'll introduce the session. So the idea of this session essentially is we're halfway through the UN decade.

We're all sort of now starting to think about, you know, what we're going to deliver for the rest of the decade, the implementation and particularly thoughts around legacy and how we're going to really build in the legacy element for the decade. But we need to keep, you know, we need to keep our sort of finger on the pulse on this one and keep the momentum. Sustainable Development Goal 14 remains the least funded of all the Sustainable Development Goals. And I think the UN decade has been absolutely and continues to be absolutely crucial in having that momentum for the ocean and action around the ocean. The Ocean Decade is the largest global ocean science initiative ever taken. And, you know, I've been involved for many years and it's a fantastic initiative. So this is part of that momentum. The reason specifically we're talking about it today is the link to the Horizon Europe.

which is, I'm sure most of you know, the world's biggest funding programme, research funding programme. And we're going to be talking about a very specific call. I won't say too much now because we have speakers on this later, but a very specific call around empowering the decade.

So the idea of this session is threefold. So firstly, what we want to do is make sure that we

have an opportunity just to hear all the latest on this. So we're going to hear from the European Commission, specifically information around this call.

We really want to sort of promote this call. We think it's really important. Secondly, we want to bring different information, you know, different groups together. And really, you know, we need to think about a way of how do we interact as a community? How do we work together as a community to deliver on this? And of course, bringing everybody together in itself is something and we felt was really important. So just to know, what I would say is we're going to leave the chat open throughout this webinar. The Q&A function will be for questions specifically, but the chat is there. And if any of you feel that it would be useful to introduce yourselves on the chat, if you want to let other people know, who you are, and if you want to leave your e-mail as well, that's fine. And we'll be collecting all that information later. So please use the chat function by all means, as I said, to leave name, contact details, because part of the main aim of this session is really all about connecting this community so that we can work together on this call.

So I'm just going to quickly go through the agenda. So the welcome, we're in the middle of that at the moment. And then with the first person we're going to hear from is Nicolas, who I'll introduce properly shortly, who's going to outline the funding call. There will then be the first Q&A. We have to have it there as Nicolas has to go to other meetings. You'll notice, as I said, these are very short segments, but we've got a lot to pack in. Please put your questions in the Q&A. And if we don't get to them all when it comes to the Q&A session over the 5 minutes, they'll be left in that Q&A so we can follow up on them. So please post your questions and particularly for the first speaker, post the questions as Nicolas is speaking so we can keep track of all of those. We'll then hear from Alison from IOC UNESCO. I'm sure many of you know anyway for all the fantastic work she does with the decade.

So we'll be hearing from Alison in the next session and then Sophia will be speaking to us then about the coordinating and support actions, which will also be really useful for us all to know. And then we'll follow up with the second Q&A and wrap up. So that's where we are with the agenda.

Just a few housekeeping rules before we start. So as I said, please try not to put questions in the chat. Use the chat to introduce yourselves, share details, talk amongst yourselves, whatever you want to use the chat for. But please submit the questions via the Q&A or I won't be able to see them when it comes to the Q&A.

session. Also make sure when you do post a question that you use the relevant speaker's name, unless it's a sort of a generic question. But yeah, if you can post who the question is for, especially in the second Q&A when we will have had two speakers. And then just you can you can enable live captioning for this event.

All the presentations will be in English, but yeah, you can use the live captioning function. And then just to share that we will be sharing a transcription and a recording of the event by e-mail afterwards, and all the slides will also be shared.

So you don't have to do that thing that many of us do in trying to take notes furiously. We will share the slides as soon as possible afterwards. So without further ado, I think there are

still people arriving, but we're going to have to keep moving. So without further ado, I'm really pleased to say that we have Nicolas Segabarth join us for the first talk. Now, Nicolas is a policy officer at the European Commission, where he works for the Healthy Ocean and Seas Unit of the Directorate General Research and Innovation. And his remit includes scientific policy and programming in the European Research framework programme, Horizon Europe. Nicolas also co-leads the EU Digital Twin Ocean Initiative, alongside his commitments as the European Commission's focal point for the G7 Future of the Seas and Ocean Initiative and his contributions to the All Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovative Alliance. So I think we've got what sounds like one of the best connected people in there for this session, which is absolutely fantastic. So Nicolas, I'm very much hoping that the take control function will work if you want to take control of the slides and I'll hand over to you. So thank you, Nicolas, and over to you.

SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD) 9:26

SN Thank you, Matt, and good day everyone. I currently managed to take control, so that's good. So thank you for giving us the opportunity to present this topic on empowering the UN Decade of Ocean Science.

It's for us an important topic, not necessarily very large in terms of budget, but a topic which we think can make a difference.

So to give it a bit of context, it's a topic that has been designed in the context of a joint roadmap that the European Commission and DG Research and Innovation in particular have with the IOC in the science division.

to try to make sure that the decade and the EU mission restore ocean and waters are mutually beneficial.

It's also very important now for us in the context of the European Ocean Pact that you probably have heard about, and of one of the main initiatives that it announced, which is the Ocean Observation Initiative. We are today at the midterm, more or less, of the Ocean Decade.

And it's probably a good time, and I'm sure that Alison after me will say some words after that. It's a good step, a good time to make a step back and look at the myriad of actions, programs, coordination centres that have been initiated under the decade.

and to see which one have the biggest potential for changing science, ocean science, as it is currently done today. So it is a topic which has for main objective to ensure that these key processes, the initiatives and the structure that have been

Put in place under the decade.

Continue that they provide the legacy.

The instrument, as we call it in the Europe and Europe jargon, is a coordination and support action, which means that it is not a topic which calls for actual research, but which calls for the coordination of different research initiatives and activities. We have a budget of 9 million euro and we estimated

that a reasonable project size would be 3 million EUR. So we expect to fund 3 projects for

that. Important point is that it's what we call a lump sum, which means that when you design a proposal, you need to very, very carefully budget all the tasks and the work packages that you have in mind.

to make sure that the budget is well designed because it is eventually after completion of a task that the project is being funded. The opening, it's already done. It was opened 12 days ago and the closure of the call will be on the 15th of April.

So in terms of expected outcomes, as I said, the main outcome that we expect from the proposals is to make sure that we have structural and long-lasting changes as per how ocean science is supported and performed globally. So it's about giving a legacy to the ocean decade.

We expect the project to contribute to the decade outcome, the seven decade outcome, the clean ocean, a healthy and resilient ocean, a productive ocean, a predicted ocean, a safe ocean, an accessible ocean, and an inspiring and engaging ocean. All these outcomes of the decade are strongly aligned with those of the mission ocean.

For the scope, as I said, it's about the consolidation of the international cooperation. It's about identifying what are the key global efforts, what are the decade programmes, the actions, the decade collaborative centres and coordination office that have

The major potential, it's about the implementation of the Vision 2030 white papers or of the Ocean Decade data and information strategy.

For the scope, so it's also important to make sure that the proposal aligns with the roadmap that we drafted between RTD and the IOC, and make sure that it addresses the mission objective, the All Atlantic Ocean Research and Alliance objective, or the Digital Ocean objective.

It should address at least one of the selected decade challenge. And there we selected the subset of all the decade challenges. And these are the subsets which are highly aligned or relevant to the mission ocean, namely pollution, biodiversity, resilience, the global ocean observing system, the digital ocean, the capacity building, and the society's relationship with the ocean. Now, a word of caution, be it with the scope or the expected outcomes, the text says at least one of the selected outcomes or challenges.

But you need to keep in mind that it's going to be a competitive bid. And so if you focus on something which is very local or which focuses only on one of the challenges or the outcomes, you may be at risk compared to other proposals which are more ambitious. So it's a difficult exercise to see how far you need

to extend the scope of your activities and still have an actual impact or being too narrowly focused.

Importantly for the funding, it's a topic where obviously international cooperation is strongly encouraged, but there you need to be careful for the funding eligibility. So a number of countries are eligible for funding under Horizon Europe, but they're not.

all. The good news is that we have recently had the association of a number of very important countries like Canada, Japan, Korea or New Zealand, which add up to the list of the usual countries that are associated to Horizon Europe and to all the low and mid income

countries.

And then last but not least, international organisations are also exceptionally eligible for funding. So I think that was the last slide. As I said, it would be very short. It's really up to the proposal to identify where they think they can make a difference, make sure that they can provide the legacy to

to the decade and make sure that all these activities go beyond the end of the decade and of the project itself. So it's really important that this proposal are there to support structural and long-lasting changes.

So, that's it. Floor is back to you, Matt.

MF Matt Frost 16:41

Thank you, Nicolas. That was that was an excellent overview. And I'm going to just open the floor now to ask people to post any questions. And while we're waiting, I'll ask a couple myself. So, as I said, that was, I mean, you gave such a clear outline of how that works. I was kind of interested in the international cooperation bit. So is any organisation in any country, you mentioned that most maybe, or is there a list of which countries are eligible?

SN SEGEBARTH Nicolas (RTD) 17:18

Yes, I put on the slide the link for the funding eligibility. So while you will share them, you will have all the rules. But basically,

MF Matt Frost 17:25

Yeah.

SN SEGEBARTH Nicolas (RTD) 17:29

High income countries are not eligible, except those who made an agreement to access Horizon Europe. So as I said, Canada, New Zealand, Korea, Japan, all recently had an agreement with Horizon Europe, so they are eligible for funding.

But that does not prevent other countries to actually participate to a project. So Horizon Europe is the most open programme in the world. So any entity in whatever country can actually participate in a proposal, be part of the consortium. It's rather flexible. They won't receive money, funding, but they are fully able to participate. And the way to be associated to a consortium is much more flexible than it used to be in previous framework programs. So it's very open.

MF Matt Frost 18:25

Excellent, thank you. I'll ask again if anybody, I mean, I'm assuming it was very, oh, so there's a question here. I'm assuming, by the way, it was a really, it was a really clear presentation. So

I think you've answered most people's, but there is a question here. So Will international organisations have to have PIC numbers to participate?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 18:55

Yes, that is part of the process. So if an international organisation is not yet recognised in the system, they will need to make sure that they are recognised as a legal entity. And that's a necessarily administrative step. I would be surprised that there are many around that have not yet participated to any proposal or project. So I wouldn't be

Too worried about that.

MF **Matt Frost** 19:20

Yeah, excellent. Thank you, Nicolas. I hope that's answered your question. Does anybody else have any questions they want to post?

On the...

There's a question here. Please try and post in the Q&A if possible, because I only see them briefly if they're in the chat. But somebody's asked, are SMEs eligible as partners?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 19:48

Yes, absolutely. Any type of entity is eligible for funding, as long as they respect the other eligibility rule, which is the state in which they are operating.

MF **Matt Frost** 20:00

Excellent, thank you. I'll just keep reading out the questions as they come in. So please keep these questions coming in. That's all very good questions. So this one is, is there any scope for marine ecosystem restoration in this funding call? Because obviously there's a different

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 20:01

Yeah.

MF **Matt Frost** 20:18

decade is a decade of ecosystem restoration, but ecosystem restoration does come into some of this discussion. So is there any scope for any of that?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 20:27

Yes, definitely. It's among the different outcomes that are on the first slide. Now, what is important is to build on decade activities. So I would not recommend that a new activity release proposed, unless it's about a specific, for instance, the implementation of the decade, data and information strategy, which is a strategy that come out from the Ocean Decade. But

it's not about proposing getting money for new programs, new activities. It's really about making sure that what has started now can continue later.

MF **Matt Frost** 20:59

Means.

Thank you, Nick. I think that's a really important point. So this is about consolidating what we're already working on and building in a legacy element to take that work forward, not about proposing brand new work areas.

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 21:17

Yeah.

MF **Matt Frost** 21:22

Excellent, thank you. I think that's really important. So thank you for that. Another question here, is there a maximum number of associated partners?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 21:33

No, there is no limit to that. Now, it's a question of organization, of course, within a consortium.

MF **Matt Frost** 21:37

Excellent.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. So that will come down to logistics and managing that one. So yeah, absolutely. Thank you. And then, so there's a few of these sort of technical questions coming in, but we may as well try and answer them now if we can. So this is a follow up from which international organisations were able to join. And it's a question of

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 21:44

Yeah.

MF **Matt Frost** 22:04

I don't quite, it's basically asking if international organisations can claim salary, travel and subsistence. I'm not quite sure if that's simple as that.

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 22:18

Yes. So, yeah, it is fairly simple. It's a direct cost, as we call it, which is necessary for the implementation of the project. So it is about time that you spend on the project. It's about travel. It's about any other cost that you may incur. But remember that it's a lump sum. That

is what I said.

in the beginning. So you are paid, you propose a budget for a certain task, and when the task is completed appropriately, then you receive the money.

MF **Matt Frost** 22:49

Yes.

Yeah, okay, excellent. And once again, some of these questions, I'm going to try to work out what the crux of the question is, but this one is, are you working with any of the other UN Ocean breakthroughs, building on the work they have started?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 23:12

I'm not sure I understand the question here.

MF **Matt Frost** 23:16

No, I have to confess. So if the person who posted that question wants to follow up and clarify a little bit, I must confess I'm also not totally sure what the crux of that question is.

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 23:28

And then maybe one additional information for the international organization, their headquarters should be, I trust, in Europe or one of the associated countries to Horizon Europe. So it's important to note.

MF **Matt Frost** 23:46

Ah, yes, no, that is, that's a really important point. Excellent, thank you.

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 23:50

But make sure that you read the funding eligibility if you propose.

MF **Matt Frost** 23:54

Yes, yeah.

So yeah, so that's a reminder to everybody that we will be posting these slides with the links into various resources. So hopefully a lot of these questions will be answered there. And yes, you can see the slide we'll be sending that. I mean, did you want to say anything about this slide, Nicolas, just about a bit about these resources or?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 24:14

No, it's just like where you have all the links to the portal where you can actually read all the

rules and actually put your proposal in the system. And then we had the info days last week where we also presented the topic and you may find information there.

MF **Matt Frost** 24:25

Yep.

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 24:34

There's the link to the roadmap between IOC and the DG Research and Innovation, and then a link to the Mission Restore Ocean and Water website. So you have all the information necessary to put up a nice proposal there, plus the information that Alison will give you in a moment.

MF **Matt Frost** 24:52

Yes.

Excellent. That is great. Thank you. Right, I'm just going to check to see if we've got... Ah, so there is another question that's come in. Sorry, I'm firing lots of questions at you here, Nicolas, but we're so happy to have you here to answer them. It is perfect. Thank you. So this question is...

Would Brazil be eligible for funding on a joint proposal with colleagues from Aoria? And this is an organisation in PO in Brazil asking this question.

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 25:25

Yes, here I'm afraid that Brazil is not eligible for funding.

It's not explicitly said in the topic, so it would be very risky, I think, to try to ask for a budget for Brazilian entities.

MF **Matt Frost** 25:43

Right, okay. So I guess the person asking this who I know is probably aware Brazil's not eligible directly, but they're asking if they came in with somebody else. Would that work?

SN **SEGBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 25:55

Well, they can come up as an associated partner in the proposal and contribute to the work, as I said, as any other, but they won't get actual funding.

MF **Matt Frost** 26:03

Yeah.

Yes. Right. Okay. I hope that's answered that question. And yeah, and okay, in that case, I think the questions, I think we've answered most, if not all of them. So thank you once again, Nicolas, that was really helpful.

And yeah, you can see by the questions, I think there's a lot of people who are going to be considering this, which is the point of this seminar to get everybody excited about this proposal. If so, I understand you've got to head off shortly, but you will be around just for another maybe 5 minutes or so, if I understand.

SN **SEGEBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 26:46

Yes, absolutely. And make sure you double check all my answers in the actual documentation and the legal documents, because that is what matters.

MF **Matt Frost** 26:49

Right, bro.

Yeah.

Yes, absolutely. Yeah, that's perfect.

SN **SEGEBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 27:00

Don't hesitate to contact the agencies for any question that you may have. There are different links on the portal, so...

MF **Matt Frost** 27:06

That's brilliant, thank you. And just to find a final reminder to everybody that as well as you've got all the resources there, which as Nicolas has said, we'll answer a lot of the technical details and a lot of the questions around eligibility and others. But also if you do have a question that you want to post in the queue, you certainly remember a question you'd like to ask for Nicolas, please post in the QA and we can follow up post-meeting. But other than that, I'm going to introduce our next speaker. And thank you once again, Nicolas. That was great. Thank you. So I'm going to ask, I'm going to introduce our next speaker now, who is Alison Clausen, who I'm sure many of you will know.

SN **SEGEBARTH Nicolas (RTD)** 27:41

Thank you.

MF **Matt Frost** 27:52

While I do this, Alice, maybe you can practise taking over the slides and putting it on to the first slide. Just brilliant. Just so I know you've got there. So Alison is the Deputy Global Coordinator of the UN Ocean Decade at the IOC UNESCO.

where Alison also works as a programme specialist in marine policy and regional coordination. Prior to joining the IOC, Alison worked on environmental issues for a wide range of NGO partners, development banks and UN agencies. most recently as the regional director for the Madagascar and Western Indian Ocean

programme of the Wildlife Conservation Society. And I know from personal experience that Alison basically works around the world with so many people doing such a fantastic job with the IOC and the UN.

decade coordination unit. So I'm really grateful, Alison, you could find the time for us today because I know what your calendar is like. So thank you so much and over to you.

Clausen, Alison 29:02

Great. Thank you, Matt. Thank you for the lovely introduction. And especially thank you to all the team at the UK NDC, the other NDC for putting this webinar together. I think it's really important. And I'd like to come back to what you said, Matt, about this, you know, we've got this amazing opportunity in front of us. Let's make sure we approach it as much as possible as a community with common priorities and really helping to to build the legacy of the decade. A huge thank you as well, of course, to the European Commission for making the funding available. From the outset, the Ocean Decade, the mandate has been that it is being implemented, it's being coordinated within existing resources, which basically means that everything we do in the decade we have to fundraise for it. And so that's not only the decade actions, but all the decade coordination. And whether that's the coordination done by the IOC or by partners, we have to fundraise, we have to mobilise resources. So opportunities like this are extremely important, particularly when, as both Matt and Nicolas said, we're at the midterm of the decade. We've had five amazing years, but we're really at a point now where we need to consolidate, where we need to create that sustainability and be thinking as a community about what is going to end, what's going to be left at the end in 2030. What are those legacy pieces?

that are going to continue on and we can look back together and say, that happened because of the decade and that there is a paradigm and fundamental shift in the way that ocean science is done and financed because of the decade. So all of that to say, an extremely exciting and important opportunity. I want to give you, and I'm going to go quickly, I've got a lot to say,

but I'll try and keep it as brief as possible. Just give you a bit of a perspective from the Decade Coordination Unit. So the Decade Coordination Unit, that's where I work, obviously. We sit within the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO. We are the global hub for coordination of the decade, but obviously we don't do it alone. We work with a lot of other coordination structures.

Some of you will know this already. For others, it may be a little newer. So I just thought it would be worthwhile to show you some of these, some of the terminology and the acronyms, because from hearing Nicolas speak about building on existing structures, building on existing initiatives and activities, building on fulfilling existing strategies, These sorts of coordination structures we think are going to be very, very important as we all think about how we're putting our funding proposals together to try and maximise this opportunity. So there's a decade coordination unit. We work very closely with a network of

thematic and regional decade collaborative centres and decade coordination officers. which are basically coordination hubs around a particular theme, a particular Ocean Decade Challenge, or within a particular region. And they lead a lot of the work, pulling together the different decade actions, identifying gaps, looking at new priorities, catalysing new initiatives. Sitting under those decade collaborative centres and decade coordination offices, We have two or two or three different types of structures. First of all, we have the DIPs, which are the decade implementing partners. And so these are organisations that have a very specific mandate to support implementation and coordination of a particular part of the decade. And then we have our decade programmes and our decade projects, which collectively

are known as the Decade Action. So these are the big multi-year international or national programmes and projects that are working essentially on the ground and with stakeholders to fulfil the Ocean Decade challenges. Sort of sitting to the side, but not entirely in such a linear way, because it's quite a complex ecosystem. We have regional task forces.

So we have a regional task force in Africa that provides us strategic advice to coordination and implementation in Africa. And we have one in the tropical Americas and Caribbean. And then we have 43 national decade committees which take all of this global action and translate it to the national level.

So you'll see it is a complex ecosystem. There are lots of players already involved in coordination who are doing incredible work both to convene stakeholders, but actually undertaking activities on the ground. And as we're thinking about putting proposals together for this funding opportunity, it'd be important to look at who those players already are that are working on these different areas. And on the website you can find a lot more detail and a lot more contact information and I'll put those details in the chat when I have finished.

In terms of, oh, now I've done something to the, okay, hopefully that's the right slide. In terms of where we are at the midpoint of the decade with some of these coordination structures, this is a slide that we use quite often to show progress against sort of the key performance indicators of decade progress.

So you can see here, and I won't go through it all in detail, but just a few things to point out. There are 62 global programmes already working in the decade. Many of those are still seeking resources to be fully funded. They are loosely organised in communities of practise where the decade coordination offices and decade collaborative centres try and bring them together to work together for collective action. Sitting under those programs, we have around 600 projects that are fulfilling specific objectives of activities, usually at the national or regional level. You can see in the bar chart underneath that the distribution of those decade programmes and projects across the different challenges. And Nicolas mentioned the 10 Ocean Decade challenges, of which there are five or six that are targeted by this funding call. And you'll see, and again, by looking at this in a bit more detail later, you can do a bit more analysis.

But you can see in several of those targeted Ocean Decade challenges or the challenges that

are targeted by this call, there are gaps in the decade actions and there are also gaps in the decade coordination. So thinking about pollution, we're lacking coordination around marine pollution. There's a lack of global action around marine pollution.

In terms of observation and data, for example, we are lacking resources to really fully coordinate the communities around data and observations and be able to implement some of those strategies that Nicolas was talking about. Similarly, around capacity development and ocean literacy, where we still have gaps in some of the coordination needs to be able to create that sustainability and that post-decade legacy. On the next part of this slide, you can see we have 13 decade collaborative centres and coordination offices. We do have major regional gaps in coordination, and I know to Aoria has already been mentioned. The Atlantic is 1 ocean basin where we do have gaps in coordination. The Arctic is another one.

We're talking to partners in some of the other regions, but you'll be able to see on the website the list of regional coordination hubs and where there are still gaps that are hindering our ability, I would say, to have the impact and sustainability that we want over the life of the decade. So I really encourage you again to look at the website.

Look at some of the structures that are already there, regionally, thematically, the national decade committees, of which there are 43, and then the decade actions to get a sense of what is already happening and where those opportunities to leverage and optimise that potential, as Nicolas was saying, do potentially exist.

Last slide, and then I'll hand back to Matt. But just to give you a bit of some of the thinking from the DCU about where some of the priority needs for coordination and governance in the decade are going to be, so that we create that impact to 2030 and that we leave that legacy post 2030. And there are three documents that I would like to mention.

in addition to the documents that Nicolas mentioned and that are contained in the funding call. And again, I'll put the links in the chat for these documents. The first of these is the Barcelona Statement and secondly, the related outcomes document from the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference.

So this was the conference that was held 18 months ago in Barcelona, which was a major conference of close to 3,000 people, which came together to set science and knowledge priorities for the decade across the different challenges, as well as looking at some of the cross-cutting challenges. The conference was sort of the culmination of the Vision 2030 process. So you have the white papers mentioned for the Vision 2030 process.

But it's also very important to look at the Barcelona statement, which is the summary document, as well as the outcomes document, which is called Ambition, Action and Impact. And so I'll put the links to both of those into the chat. The third document that I really wanted to draw your attention to was the results and the action plan coming out the midterm evaluation of the Ocean Decade.

We've said already the decade is at its midpoint. We had an external evaluation carried out last year, and there is a publicly available action plan, which really sets out the priorities for delivery of the impact of the decade to 2030 and beyond. It aligns very, very well, obviously, with the priorities and the thinking behind the call.

but it's something that I think goes into more detail around some of the specific challenges and needs as we think about priorities for coordination and really enhancing that international cooperation, as Nicolas was saying. We're looking across global coordination. We're looking at sustainability, impact and post 2030 longevity of existing structures. And then we're looking at filling gaps. And then as we're thinking about those things, keeping in mind the structures, the processes that already exist, as well as some of those reference documents, both the very important documents referenced in the call and then the other documents that I mentioned. So looking forward to working with many of you as this progresses.

and really interested to see what comes out of this. But thanks again to the NDC who pulled this webinar together and of course to the commission and back over to you, Matt.

MF **Matt Frost** 39:42

Thank you, Alison. Another excellent presentation in terms of being really comprehensive and I think you will have answered a lot of people's questions already. Nevertheless, there are questions in the Q&A, which we will get to after the next speaker. We're going to take two speakers back-to-back. Please, can I encourage you to keep posting your questions

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 40:02

Sorry, this much.

MF **Matt Frost** 40:04

and highlight which of the speakers the question is for. And then without further ado, I'm going to hand over to our final speaker, who is Sophia Cordero, who's going to give a talk on coordination and support action best practice. Sophia, can I just ask if you could try and take

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 40:21

No problem.

Yes.

Painting.

MF **Matt Frost** 40:37

Hi, Sofia.

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 40:37

First of all, Matt, do you hear me well?

MF **Matt Frost** 40:40

Yes, I hear you perfectly.

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 40:41

Yes. Okay, okay, good. Because we are having some issues here with the microphone, but excellent. Thank you.

MF **Matt Frost** 40:47

Thank you. I'll just introduce you and then you'll be ready to go with the talk. So, thank you very much. So, Sophia is the Deputy Director General at the Portuguese Directorate Member States and Associated countries. Sorry, I'll just find my, find the rest of my notes here. Yep, here we go. Deputy General at the Portuguese Directorate Estudos. I'm not going to actually attempt to read this, Sophia, if it's okay, because I've got it in Portuguese and my accent is terrible.

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 41:22

Yeah.

Yeah.

MF **Matt Frost** 41:24

I'll just say it's that the DGEPA, the Director General for Studies Planning and Evaluations, I'll read the English translation, which is easier for me, apologies for that. Prior to this, she was a board member and later Deputy Executive Director for the Atlantic International Research Centre,

working towards an integrative approach to space, climate, ocean and energy in the Atlantic. Sophia also has many years experience as a science officer at both the Foundation for Science and Technology and EurOcean. And during Sophia's time at FCT, she coordinated the

Anchor CSA, an action to support implementation of the All Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance, Aoria, promoting pole-to-pole cooperation and research innovation. Once again, we're incredibly grateful, Sophia, you've taken time out of a busy schedule to speak to us and share about best practice. Really looking forward to hearing from you. So over to you. Thank you.

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 42:29

Thank you very much, Matt, and it is a pleasure to be here with you today. Well, as you said, I was a previous or I was a coordinator of the Anchor Project that was supporting the All Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance. And it is with that experience that I bring here some

best practises on how to develop these types of CSAs, which have a very important diplomacy, science diplomacy end goal. And both Alison and Nicolas have said a lot of science diplomacy documents that you should, you really have to incorporate in your

proposal. So you really need to think that these coordination and support actions, especially these that are policy oriented ones, they are really here to support, to coordinate and enhance research and innovation activities.

supporting science diplomacy activities. In this case, the implementation of the UN decade for the ocean. So really they do not fund research. Well, sorry, too fast. I don't know. I don't know how to.

How? Well, I will tell you what, yes.

MF **Matt Frost** 43:53

Hi, Sophia, sorry, what, what, what you trying to do? You want to move it forward or?

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 43:59

I'm trying to do because I had some.
some things that would show up when I move the...

MF **Matt Frost** 44:10

Okay, so what I'm going to suggest, Sophie, very quickly, if we can make this work, I'll take control and then you take control straight back and we'll see if that fixes it.

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 44:16

Okay.
Okay.

MF **Matt Frost** 44:21

Yeah, okay, just one moment.
Um...

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 44:32

Yes, exactly that. I was not able to show you the remaining part, but you can have it, Matt, and I will tell you to move the slides when needed. Okay, so as I was saying, the CSAs, they really don't fund research and innovation activities. They are totally different from the research and innovation actions.

MF **Matt Frost** 44:36

Oh.
Okay, let's do it that way then, yeah. Okay.

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 44:54

and innovation actions themselves that are funded within the Horizon Europe. So here the scope is really to support, to coordinate the efforts that already exist and whenever possible build on existing

work. Matt, you can move to the next slide, please. So in terms of the evaluation logic, it is really policy, the political relevance and alignment with the existing policies and to support decision making. One thing that you have heard

Alison speaking, it was legacy. Legacy, it's very important in these types of CSAs. Next, Matt. In terms of the proposal structure, so you will, you know that all Horizon Europe proposals have two parts, the A and the B.

Here I will speak a bit and try to give you some tips for the part B, excellence, impact and implementation. Matt, next slide, please.

You can move on and show the, oh yes, the other one also. Good. We have the old slide here. So in terms of the excellence, it is very important that you have clear operational policy objectives and align with the EU priorities and the UN decade.

goals. As I said, everything that Alison and Nicolas have said, you have to include in the proposal text. And in terms of activities, it's valued, the participatory and the co-creation methodologies. Here in this slide, you have some example of participatory methodologies and co-creation

ones that you could use. It's very important that there is an open dialogue, open conversation with the society because these policy activities only have a legacy and only have

fruits if we engage the community. That is something that we really learn with the AmandaHGoble project. Next slide, Matt.

In terms of impact, the focus is not the number of papers or the novelty of the research that you are developing, but really the policy impact. So it needs, you need to link the impacts directly. What is in the work programme has in all other projects, but really specific the policy impacts. You should also describe how these impacts are taken up and by whom they are taken up. So engage public authorities and different stakeholders. And you also need to have in mind that you are supporting the implementation and also in some cases reporting processes.

that at the end are not yours. You are an instrument and the CSA is an instrument to implement and support implementation of something bigger than you, an umbrella. And so it is very important to have these in mind. In terms of examples for impacts, for example, How are the integration of results, international European strategies and UN policies will take place? How are you supporting the decision making? And also important is in this science diplomacy processes, is this relevant?

whenever possible, to harmonise the approaches across the member states in order that it is easier afterwards to implement what comes after. So harmonisation whenever possible is important. However, it is also crucial that we understand the different perspectives of the stakeholders and the different perspectives of the different countries that are being engaged in the project implementation. Next slide, Matt.

In terms of dissemination and exploitation, it is very important for the CSAs. I do remember in Anchor that we had to rewrite twice our communication plan, and we were asked that, and they were revised directly by the co-chairs of the alliance.

So it was really a key document for the whole process. And we were requested not only to include how we would disseminate and exploit which stakeholders we would engage which were the different types of documents we would produce. And not only this, but also try to adapt all of it to the different countries that were engaged in the alliance. So there is a lot of heterogeneity, as you know,

And it is important that everyone feels embraced, included. So it is really important. You cannot only focus on EU policies or EU stakeholders. No, you really need to go broad than that and engage.

actively and inclusively everyone that is relevant for the process that you are developing. So it is important also to distinguish between communication, dissemination and exploitation. In terms of outputs, they should be very decision-making oriented ones.

End.

also crucial is that they are produced in a way that they are aligned with the policy cycles. So imagine that there is a UNDCATE big conference. It is important that you have products and outcomes to show in that specific meeting. So everything in your proposals need to be aligned

with that bigger umbrella that is above you. Matt, next slide.

Oh, the golden rule for the CSAs is very important, yes. So in terms of who to include the stakeholders, you should have a broad diversity of these stakeholders. So we should include who decides, who uses,

who implement and also who can create multiple impact in all the activities that you do. Like visits, this is the only way that you can really enhance the impact that you are developing within your project. Next slide, Matt.

You can show the other one too. OK, good. So, in terms of consortium and implementation, as I said, it is important to have not only diverse stakeholders topology, but also this diversity should be reflected in the consortium. So, you it is it could be.

good if you could have academia, public administration, intermediary or interface organisation and civil society. Academia only consortia are generally penalised in these types of coordination and support actions.

Matt Frost 52:51

Hi, Sophia, sorry, just to let you know, we probably need to do the last few slides in a couple of minutes to allow people to ask you questions, which I think a lot of people, just to let you know.

Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA) 52:51

One other.

Sure, I will be very brief. In the second part of the slide, what I would like you to retain is flexibility. So as I said, you are not the owners of the process. There is something that is bigger than the project itself. So lots of flexibility can be requested.

 **Matt Frost** 53:05

Yeah, thank you.

 **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 53:23

And it's very important that the consortium is available to implement this flexible, this flexibility. Next slide.

In terms of what you deliver, we have been in the anchor project requested to implement key performance indicators and they were discussed with the signatories of the All Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance Declaration. So they were very

They give us a lot of orientation on how these key performance indicators would be developed. And it's very important that you do them in a policy-oriented view. And also regarding sustainability, you should think on

how the outcomes of this project can be used afterwards, after this project ends, and specifically without direct funding from the European Union or any other funding. That would be very important. Next slide.

So finally, in terms of key takeaways, you really need to think less like a scientific project and more like a public policy instrument project. You need to show, demonstrate flexibility, the relevance of what you are doing, the utility,

tangible impact and, as I said, sustainability. And also the language. I should take into account that I should use language of governance, decision making and implementation.

Thank you.

 **Matt Frost** 55:15

Thank you, Sophia. That was great. That was really useful. Well, I'm going to keep us moving on because I just want to see even if it's just a couple minutes to have time for questions.

Just a reminder to everybody that those slides, I mean, there was so much useful information there. Thank you so much, Sophia. They are going to be provided afterwards. So you will get time to digest that a little bit more. And Janice and others, I

I hope you managed to see those slides. If not, yes, they will be provided. So just literally in

the last two or three minutes, if anybody has questions, please put them in the Q&A. There

are a couple there already relating to Alison's talk. So firstly, to go back to

Alison, and this question is, you mentioned gaps in coordination. Do you have an example of an existing good example of coordination in action? Sorry, that was a bit a bit mangled there. I'll read that. Do you have a good example of coordination in action?

 **Clausen, Alison** 56:14

That's right.

Yeah, thanks for the question. And there are many. I think there are probably too many to name them all. But certainly there are very, very effective decade collaborative centres and decade coordination offices that are working already. So there are a network of 13 decade collaborative centres and decade coordination offices. You can see those on the website.

 **Matt Frost** 56:22

Yeah.

 **Clausen, Alison** 56:40

You can see the details of what they're doing. You have focal points there, but all of those are working very closely as good examples of coordination at that level. And then amongst the NDCs as well, we have a very big group of NDCs and there are some of those NDCs that usually because of resourcing and so on are more active and engaged than others, but who are providing that coordination at the national level. So yes, there are certainly good examples and we work very closely with those structures to ensure that as much as possible they have optimal functioning.

 **Matt Frost** 57:14

Excellent. Thank you, Alison. There's another question here, but perhaps Sophie, maybe, I think you maybe touched on this in your talk, but both feel free to address it. And this is the targets for the Ocean Decade challenges range over groups from children to international research. So the question is,

You know, who are these three EU funded projects when they get funded to be targeted at? The public, government, research, or should they seek to target multiple audiences? So I don't know who wants to come in on that.

 **Clausen, Alison** 57:51

I mean, I can, I'm happy to start on that. And I think, yes, they should be seeking to target multiple audiences. And I think Sophia was very, very expressed this very clearly in her presentation. I mean, the decade is really about co-design, right? It's about bringing groups of multiple stakeholders, including users of knowledge together to identify the needs, to generate the knowledge, and then to apply that knowledge.

So for certain issues, it may be more focused at policymakers, others such as I'm thinking some of the ocean literacy work may be more focused at children or educators. But in any case, across any challenge, we like to think of having multiple stakeholders across the whole value chain that have come together in these co-design and participatory processes. that Sophia was talking about.

MF **Matt Frost** 58:38

Thank you. Sophia, did you want to add anything to that or is that kind of...

SC **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 58:41

No, I fully concur with what Alison said. Sometimes it's not easy to engage everyone at the same time, but maybe you could use a stepwise approach. I don't know. And at the end, engage everyone at different levels.

MF **Matt Frost** 58:58

Excellent, thank you. I'm just going to ask one final question because I think the answer will be quick and straightforward and then we'll wrap up. So somebody said, just to clarify, is the EU funding to set up a new coordination centre for the UN decade?

CA **Clausen, Alison** 59:16

Look, my feeling is that it could be, and I'm saying this not as the EU, obviously, I'm saying this as where we as the DCU see the needs. The example, and if you go back to what Nicolas said about this is, this funding is about what has started and what could continue and build impact. So you can imagine, for example, there's a group of decade programmes

MF **Matt Frost** 59:18

Yeah.

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah.

CA **Clausen, Alison** 59:38

There's no coordination centre to bring those programmes together and have that long-lasting sustainability and impact. It would seem that that could be something that could be eligible for funding. That's the way I would think about it. But again, I'm saying that not as somebody from the commission who will be evaluating or looking at these proposals or you know, thinking about those questions, but that's a viewpoint from the DCU.

MF **Matt Frost** 1:00:04

Brilliant, thank you. Yes, so I am actually just going to wrap up now. We're on 1:00, so we need to wrap up and close. So firstly, just to say, yeah, as I said, thank you so much, Sophia, Alison, Nicolas for the record as well. A really great selection of talks, which I think really made this a lot clearer for everybody. Just to say, could we ask please that the Secretariat of the UK National Decade Committee will be circulating a feedback form. You can actually access it now using the QR code on the slide and we'd really appreciate feedback on this.

We'll also again circulate the slide pack and a link to the recording, as we said. A reminder, a very important reminder, the deadline for this funding call is the 15th of April 2026. So let's all start talking to each other now. I think that's really the point of that one. And then just very quickly, we will be posting more information on this.

So if you do want to follow the UK National Decade Committee on LinkedIn, then please go ahead and we'll put other stuff on this. And then finally, just a reminder that a lot of the resources will be on the slides. So you please use the slides to access the resources. Thank you. We are about 60 seconds over. Forgive me, but we will finish now. So much appreciated all of you.

your time and let's go away and start collaborating on this fantastic opportunity. So thank you all and enjoy the rest of your day. Bye.

 **Clausen, Alison** 1:01:40

And thanks to you, Matt, and all the team. Bye bye.

 **Sofia Cordeiro (DGEPA)** 1:01:41

Thank you, bye.

 **Matt Frost** 1:01:42

Yeah, bye.

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