



# CALL TO ACTION

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from Venice to Nice to Belem



## GOALS

The Declaration aims at engaging Member States in a new series of actions to include Ocean Literacy in the spheres of education, science, policy, economics, and culture.

By restoring and expanding humanity's understanding of the ocean, Ocean Literacy will empower communities to respect the marine environment and preserve ocean cultures around the world. Ocean is intertwined with human life and is therefore key to achieving the United Nations' Agenda 2030.

## PREAMBLE

We, the Governments of Australia, Sweden, and French Polynesia, along with the French Ministry of National Education, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Federative Republic of Brazil, convened in Nice for the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Governments of France and Costa Rica for hosting us in this exceptional setting: a city whose profound relationship with the sea has shaped its culture, traditions and values.

The history, identity, and fortune of Nice, like many coastal cities and regions around the world, reflect the interdependent nature of our relationship with the ocean.

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As such, we, the Governments of Australia, Sweden, and French Polynesia, along with the French Ministry of National Education, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Federative Republic of Brazil,

ACKNOWLEDGING that the ocean is the lifeblood of our planet, producing more than half of the oxygen on planet Earth, regulating our weather and climate and underpinning the water cycle which makes life on land possible,

RECOGNIZING that the ocean provides sustenance; a space for fun and recreation, and support for our mental and physical health,

RECOGNIZING that the ocean's well-being is inseparable from our own,

NOTING that, as our understanding of marine ecosystems improves, so too does our awareness of the impact that our behaviour has on ocean health,

NOTING that this interconnectedness underscores the critical role of Ocean Literacy in shaping a sustainable future and the success of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,

CONCERNED that the transmission of oceanic heritage, culture and knowledge is vital for all human beings who depend on the ocean, as well as for future generations,

CONSIDERING that Ocean Literacy is more than an understanding of ocean science, but a means to recognize the far-reaching consequences of our actions,

CONSIDERING that by cultivating a global culture of ocean stewardship, we can facilitate a future where we thrive in harmony with the ocean,

AWARE that it is our collective responsibility to foster a more just and sustainable relationship with our vital global commons,

HENCE RECOGNIZING that we need an ocean-literate society that advocates for policies that respect the ocean's inherent right to exist, flourish and regenerate,

RECALLING that blue education, and school education in particular, is a fundamental lever for changing society towards ocean and marine environment preservation,

NOTING that it is crucial and a priority to improve the level of scientific understanding of issues relating to the Ocean,



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EMPHASISING that it is essential to strengthen pupils' links with the living world by using educational approaches conducted in natural areas, mobilising all subject areas and encouraging their active participation,

CONSIDERING the importance of providing teachers with appropriate training and educational resources

WELCOMING that, to support this development, UNESCO has been promoting ocean literacy for eleven years, and in particular the blue schools programme, to help schools around the world put their blue education projects into practice,

RECALLING that the Ocean Literacy movement has undergone a remarkable evolution, from its beginnings as a school-based initiative to teach ocean science into a vibrant, global community that recognizes the ocean's vital importance to our future,

FURTHER RECALLING that this diverse network, spanning cultures, generations, and geographies, shares a passion for the ocean and a commitment to respect it, and is increasingly drawing on the wisdom of Indigenous peoples and local communities to ensure equity and inclusivity,

RECOGNIZING that through common purpose and close collaboration, this community is working tirelessly to restore humanity's relationship with the ocean, in alignment with the goals of the Ocean Decade, and with a view to enabling the development of a sustainable ocean economy that ensures environmental well-being and human prosperity for generations to come,

AWARE that the European Commission DG MARE has played a leading role in the development of ocean literacy in formal education through the European Blue Schools network and through the funding of projects to strengthen this network,

RECOGNIZING that actions and policies must be developed at the same time to guarantee the sustainability of the educational process, as the commitment led by the Brazilian Government to a continuous development of the Blue Curriculum as public policies at national and subnational levels of the educational system, including programmes of capacity building for teachers, production of educational material and wider engagement of the society through the Blue Schools Network and the Ocean Olympics,

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FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the concept of Educational Marine Areas (EMAs), initiated by pupils in the Marquesas Islands of French Polynesia to take care of the bay next to their school, could strengthen ocean literacy and blue schools networks by providing children and teachers with an operational methodology to help Blue Schools projects,

ACKNOWLEDGING that the concept of EMAs facilitate out-of-school learning, in contact with nature, enabling children to explore their region, its people, environment, and culture and their various relationships with it, thereby developing cross-curricular skills through meaningful, practical projects,

WELCOMING the work done by the French government and the French Biodiversity Agency to develop the initiative in more than 1,500 schools in France and internationally, and the institutional desire to further develop this educational initiative, whose feedback shows its added value in terms of understanding environmental issues, learning anchored directly and concretely in a territory and its local players, and learning about citizenship, as students are directly involved in managing this natural area through a student council that debates and makes decisions.

## CALL FOR THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

We:

URGE all UN Member States, as well as all other stakeholders and interested parties, to place Ocean Literacy at the forefront of their political agenda, whether this be through support for the Blue Schools network, the adoption of a Blue Curriculum or the establishment of dedicated Marine Educational Areas managed in a participatory manner with school pupils;

INVITE Member States to enable the actions outlined below;

CALL for the forging of robust partnerships with Indigenous peoples and local communities, educational and scientific institutions, businesses and the broader public;

ENCOURAGE Member States to strengthen their policies and strategies in the months leading up to COP30, hosted by the Government of Brazil in November 2025, leaving no one behind;



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INVITE UNESCO to support the dissemination of EMAs, develop the necessary tools and resources to assist other Member States in developing these initiatives, and include them in the Blue Schools network, while fostering programmes of twinning and collaboration;

INVITE UNESCO and the French Biodiversity Agency to support Member States in further experimentation to scale the EMA concept, facilitating their implementation in order to help expand the Global Blue Schools Network;

INVITE MEMBER STATES to develop the Global Blue Schools Network and commit with the Blue Curriculum development using all tools at their disposal for blue education, including the concept of EMAs.

## TAKE ACTION NOW!

This Call to Action urges governments, NGOs, the private sector, academia, and philanthropies to take meaningful, measurable steps to expand the reach and impact of Ocean Literacy across education, science, culture, policy, and society.

We invite you to join the initiative by registering specific commitments that will contribute to restoring and strengthening humanity's relationship with the ocean.

**To register your commitments or find out more, [click here!](#)**

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Government Offices of Sweden

