

OOSC Town Hall

Title: Optimising the potential of aquatic food systems - Science needs for a Blue Transformation

Date and time: Thursday 5 June, 12:45-13:45

Location: Room 5

Related to Theme(s):

7. Sustainability, equitability, and safety of ocean-based food systems,
1. Integrating knowledge systems, with a focus on responsibility and respect for the ocean

Organizer(s):

- Erik Olsen, eriko@hi.no (main contact)
- Vera Agostini, vera.agostini@fao.org
- Celine Tiffay, celine.tiffay@fao.org (support)

Chairperson:

Dr Erik Olsen, Head of the Sustainable Development Research Group, Institute of Marine Research (IMR), Bergen, Norway & PI of the UN Ocean Decade Project ClimeFOOD

Keynote speaker:

Dr. Vera Agostini, FAO

Panellists:

- Stefan Gelcich, Instituto Milenio en Socio-Ecología Costera, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, Chile
- Shakuntala Thilsted, Nutrition, Health and Food Security Impact Area Platform, CGIAR, Washington D.C., United States
- Maria Darias, MARBEC, Université Montpellier, CNRS, Ifremer, IRD, Montpellier, France
- Mackrina Patrick Nombo
- David Obura, CORDEO East Africa
- Eddie Allison, WorldFish

Abstract:

The high and growing prevalence of hunger and malnutrition in the world suggests that global food systems are failing to provide equitable access to safe, nutritious, sustainable, affordable, and culturally preferred food. A transformation of food systems is therefore needed, as highlighted by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. Aquatic foods hold a unique potential to contribute to this transformation thanks to their high nutritional value, importance for livelihoods, cultural significance, and relatively low

environmental impact, but the lack of a whole food systems approach to their management prevents us from achieving their potential.

The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (hereafter, Ocean Decade) Vision 2030 process outlined the science, knowledge, and innovation needs required to optimise the ocean's role across a number of challenges, providing an excellent platform to enhance connectivity between aquatic food systems science and broader ocean users and governance. As part of this, science needs to “Sustainably nourish the global population” (Ocean Decade Challenge 3) were identified to ultimately deliver a ‘Blue Transformation’. Our Town Hall event will summarise several key recommendations that emerged from the Challenge 3 White Paper, providing an overarching understanding of the gaps and opportunities for aquatic food systems science. It will provide an opportunity to frame global discussions on the science needs and gaps to support action on equitable and sustainable aquatic food systems and identify key pathways and synergies to effectively leverage these. While numerous international initiatives have focused on policy and practice solutions to challenges in aquatic food systems, our event highlights that each of these proposed solutions has specific science needs to be identified and addressed.

Key guiding questions of the event will be:

- (1)** What are the main challenges that aquatic food systems are facing?,
- (2)** What are the main science objectives and needs to meet these challenges?, and
- (3)** How can we strengthen the science-policy-practice nexus to support aquatic food systems?
- (4)** What are the opportunities from UNOC to raise/advance on some of these issues?

The target audience for this Town Hall will be intentionally cross-cutting, bridging disciplines and stakeholder groups, including experts (e.g. ranging from nutritionists, economists, to climate-change specialists), practitioners and managers (e.g. fisheries bodies, blue economy organisations), and policymakers from both the industrialized and emerging nations. By having this wider array of audience members, the event itself will promote a whole food systems approach in the way it tackles aquatic food systems science needs.

The outcome of this Town Hall will be recommendations on how to make the science needs to support a Blue transformation identified by the Vision 2030 process more actionable within the UN Ocean Decade.

Timetable:

Time	Item	Lead
12:45	Introduction and problem setting - Slido question to audience	Erik Olsen (IMR)
12:50	Keynote address: Understanding the science-policy nexus for a Blue Transformation of aquatic food systems	Vera Agostini (FAO)
13:00	Include audience interaction through Slido:	Erik Olsen (IMR)
13:05	Panel discussion: What are the key barriers in the science - policy interface that need to be overcome to address the challenges aquatic food systems are facing (seen from the perspective of the UNOD Decade Visioning White paper)	Panel: Stefan Gelcich, Shakuntala Thilsted, Maria Darias, Mackrina Patrick Nombo, David Obura, Eddie Allison
13:25	Audience interaction (Q&A)	Erik Olsen (IMR)
13:35	Response from panelists and closing statements	Panel
13:43	Closing remarks	Erik Olsen (IMR)
13:45	End of session	

Outcomes

- Report (longer minutes of the event)
- Recommendations to UNOC / Nutrition summit (shorter key messages, based on the conclusion of the panel discussion)