

Sustaining Deep-Sea Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction

*DOSI Report for Arcadia
For the period of 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026*

Executive Summary

Over the past 13 years, DOSI has vastly expanded its impact as an effective boundary organisation connecting deep-ocean science and policy. DOSI's work has been underpinned by sustained community building over decades by its founding members and the evolution of trusted relationships across scientific, policy and philanthropic communities. A central figure in shaping this vision was Kristina Gjerde, who played a pivotal role in introducing leading scientists to the complex world of international ocean governance through her role at the IUCN. Sadly, Kristina passed away at the end of last year. Her leadership was instrumental in enabling DOSI to become a respected interface between science and policy.

Kristina's passing was a profound loss to the DOSI community and beyond. However, her legacy continues to guide DOSI's work. Her mentorship and vision have empowered many members of the DOSI Core Team, including a wider network of members and especially Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs), to engage meaningfully in policy processes and contribute scientific and other forms of knowledge to decision-making at global scales.

Kristina formally introduced DOSI co-founders and Steering Committee members to Dr Gerardo Fragoso of the Arcadia Fund because she recognised that our shared interests in ocean and planetary protection aligned. Her impact and influence, thanks to Arcadia's invaluable support, will resonate for decades to come.

DOSI remains committed to advancing its original mission, ensuring that robust deep-ocean knowledge informs the critical decisions shaping the future of our ocean and planet. DOSI will continue to honour Kristina Gjerde's legacy and celebrate her rich life through the ongoing impact of this work.



Nature Ecology and Evolution published a fitting tribute to Kristina, co-authored by DOSI co-founder Lisa Levin. [Kristina M. Gjerde \(1957–2025\) | Nature Ecology & Evolution](#).



The DOSI Steering Committee met in February 2025 for a strategy meeting at Kristina's home in Boston. From left to right Lisa Levin, Maila Guillon, Diva Amon, Kristina Gjerde, Maria Baker, Elva Escobar.

DOSI has deployed 53 in-person Ambassadors in the past 12 months to participate in 29 key international meetings, with many more DOSI members supporting Ambassadors remotely. In-person DOSI Ambassadors comprise 41 members from 21 countries. 78% are female, 34% are from Lower- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC), and 54% are Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs).

DOSI has also supported over 71 international members (61% female, majority ECOPs and from LMICs) to attend 3 DOSI-organised workshops.

DOSI has hosted 4 Side Events at international meetings, produced 6 peer-reviewed papers, 3 new Policy Briefs, 1 Information Sheet, 5 Policy Brief translations (into French, Spanish and Arabic), 2 stakeholder submissions, 5 meeting blogs, 6 episodes (season 1) of the [Think Deep! podcast](#) (with season 2 currently in production), and 6 [Working Group explanatory videos](#).

Members of the DOSI Steering Committee have changed this year, firstly with Harriet Harden-Davies stepping down to focus on her role as BBNJ Working Group co-lead and then with the departure of Diva Amon, who is remaining engaged in her co-leadership role of the Biodiversity Task Force. Shortly afterwards, we had the very sad loss of Kristina. However, we are delighted to have recruited 4 new Steering Committee members in April, Christine Gaebel, Beatriz Naranjo Elizondo, Hannah Lily and Jeff Ardron, and the team now comprises 3 founding members along with 3 ECOPs and 2 further experts. This exciting step for DOSI ensures both continuity and succession as we move forward.

There have also been changes in Working Group leadership roles, with Eva Ramirez-Llodra, Matt Gianni and Bernadette Butfield stepping away from their roles (retiring or other priorities), and welcoming ECOP Natalya Gallo to co-lead the DOSI Climate Change Working Group. Filling in the gaps left by departing co-leads is underway.

As for challenges, this year, many DOSI colleagues from the USA have joined others from around the globe who face significant challenges in terms of science funding, participation in international collaborative projects, and the ability to travel to key meetings. There have also been limited delegation badges for Observer Organisations for some of the UN conferences and proceedings, which DOSI often relies on. As always, DOSI is working hard to keep all colleagues involved in deep-ocean science-policy processes and to support them in myriad ways wherever possible.

In terms of financial support, DOSI has secured a further 3-year grant from Synchronicity Earth with funding amounting to £210K, plus a further £6K for Season 2 of the DOSI Podcast *ThinkDeep!*. This funder will have provided 11 years of continuous support for DOSI's communication initiatives by June 2029. In December 2025, DOSI was nominated by REV Ocean for the prestigious 2026 Earthshot Prize, with the shortlist announcement to come later in 2026. This is the second Earthshot nomination that DOSI has received. We have also received donations from Mary Yang \$25K, Dalio Philanthropies \$25K, JM Kaplan \$5K, Ocean45 \$40K, which will support DOSI Ambassador travel, and funding from philanthropic organisations via the Vanuatu Government to enable DOSI scientists to attend a meeting in Kenya in June 2026, a meeting which is hoped will define the start of a new funded global deep-sea scientific review in collaboration with Vanuatu. Finally, following the Challenger 150 'Mapping the Atlantic' workshop in June last year, 3 successful funding proposals have been awarded significant grants for the community to take the work forward in 3 separate but related projects: Coral Cartography (\$1.5 million funded by CORDAP), Deep Vision (\$2 million funded by Bezos Earth Fund) and Deep Map (\$2.7 million funded by Oceanshot). The Oceanshot award includes support for a DOSI stakeholder workshop in 2027/8.

With permission from Arcadia, DOSI has made a few necessary changes to budgeting that are discussed in the finance section of the report. DOSI greatly appreciates Arcadia's ongoing flexibility and trust in our best use of these precious funds.

DOSI Activities

Core Team and Staffing

DOSI Core Team members continue to work to ensure the smooth operation of DOSI to achieve its mission. The DOSI Office team of 4 continues to thrive, and is currently interviewing for a new position of Operations Manager (to be based at the University of Southampton) with the hope that this fifth DOSI staff member will begin in summer 2026. The new Operations Manager will support internal DOSI processes, policies and compliance, financial reporting and other activities. DOSI's Executive Director has recently negotiated with the University of Southampton and the University of Western Australia to enable the retention of the current Communications Manager, Elin Thomas, and Digital Officer, Bernadette Butfield, for the coming 3 years.

Members of the DOSI Office are encouraged to undertake training and other opportunities that will help with their future careers. This encouragement includes scientific, policy and mission-related activities. The DOSI Programme Officer, Chris Barrio Froján, has achieved a promotion within the University of Southampton with his new position commencing from 1 August 2026. This is a very well-deserved recognition of his contributions.

Two ECOPs (Sarah de Mendoça and Kirsty McQuaid) were hired this year as temporary team members to work on targeted projects. This support is crucial when we largely rely on voluntary contributions from experts, and at a time when we must highlight our work on topics relevant for current processes. Kirsty McQuaid, from South Africa, will dedicate 50% of her time to the new Ocean45 collaborative project to inform BBNJ. This project is funded by Oceans5/Bloomberg.

Quarterly DOSI Core Team meetings make good use of the diverse expertise within our membership, addressing key issues for the DOSI mission, for example, discussion of plans for the second season of the DOSI podcast, the role of ECOPs in DOSI activities, development of internal policies regarding DOSI Ambassador policy engagement guidance and the growing number of partnership and MoU requests. We also bring together the leadership teams from our Working Groups and Steering Committee to discuss cross-Working Group issues, including areas for collaboration and any issues arising or challenges faced. This effort has enhanced cooperation between the leadership teams, uplifting joint Working Group activities that address the nexus of some of our main areas of focus, such as climate, biodiversity, and impacts. Noting that not all members are necessarily available (as they are spread across many time zones), we record these meetings to give everyone the opportunity to listen, digest, and contribute.

New Internal Policies

Alongside our existing suite of internal policies that guide our actions, last year we embarked on the production of a [DOSI Policy Engagement Guidance](#) and pocket-sized [Rules of Engagement](#) document, which we finalised in August 2025. All DOSI Ambassadors attending science-policy engagement events read and adhere to this guidance in advance of and during their participation. DOSI Ambassador Certificates are provided as and when requested in recognition of DOSI engagement. This is important for some of our ambassadors, especially for ECOPs and those from LMICs.

We also developed a new [Communications Strategy](#) for the 2026-2032 period. This strategy was a timely update given that DOSI's previous Communications Strategy was produced in 2019, and many of its objectives had since been successfully achieved. Building on the previous strategy, this new strategic period focuses on enhancing visibility, expanding capacity within the DOSI community, and increasing the reach and impact of scientific knowledge in global policy and governance processes.

Further, a dedicated Task Force is developing a new tailored EDI policy that will enhance our existing internal policy document. We will be consulting externally to ensure we have the best possible plans in place. Availability of core members of this group has delayed this initiative, but we are working to ensure it is completed in the coming months, with new leadership from one of our new Steering Committee members.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. Uphold scientific integrity

- Present information rooted in peer-reviewed science and evidence, making clear where uncertainty exists.
- Ensure your contributions are neutral, non-partisan, and grounded in the best available data, not personal values or policy preferences.
- Speak clearly about science, not what should be done, unless DOSI has an agreed position on the issue. E.g. It's fine to say "overwhelming evidence shows that bottom trawling generally has negative effects on seafloor biodiversity", but not fine to say "We must ban bottom trawling." The latter is a societal decision; the former is a fact.

2. Align with DOSI's agreed messaging and principles

- Use DOSI policy briefs, information sheets, and public statements as your primary source for key messages.
- Represent DOSI only within the boundaries of its core principles (e.g. science-based decision-making, transparency, ocean stewardship).
- If unsure whether a position is agreed upon, check with the relevant DOSI Working Group or the DOSI Office before speaking.

3. Clarify who you are representing

- Make it clear when you are speaking on behalf of DOSI and when you are speaking in a personal capacity (or for another entity, if you are wearing multiple hats).
- If engaging in advocacy beyond DOSI's scope (e.g. supporting a moratorium on an activity), do so outside of your DOSI representation, and clearly indicate this distinction.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

4. Engage strategically in science-policy forums

- Promote the integration of deep-ocean science into decision-making processes by clearly communicating evidence relevant to the policy under discussion.
- Support informed decision-making by offering scientific input, but avoid recommending specific policy actions unless DOSI has a position.
- Where appropriate, highlight the scientific implications or trade-offs, incl. differing levels of risk to the marine environment, of different policy options, without advocating for one over another.
- Define clear goals and a plan for your participation. Ensure your objectives align with DOSI's broader strategy and avoid undermining other DOSI interventions or areas of engagement.

5. Be a collaborative, informed representative

- Coordinate with other DOSI members before and during events to ensure coherence in messaging and strategic focus.
- Seek mentorship from experienced DOSI Ambassadors as necessary, and read background materials in advance of policy engagements.
- Cultivate respectful, trust-based relationships with policymakers and other delegates.
- Contribute to post-event reporting to capture outcomes, learning, and next steps for DOSI as a whole.



Guidance in your pocket - new postcard-sized Rules of Engagement for DOSI Ambassadors.

Progress Towards DOSI Objectives

Updated DOSI Strategic Objectives (Purpose)

1	To promote the conservation and sustainable management of the deep ocean
2	To provide timely, relevant and accessible science-based deep-ocean knowledge to stakeholders and policymakers
3	To support and empower knowledge holders globally to engage in policy processes relevant to DOSI's mission
4	To encourage and support the professional development of early-career deep-ocean stewards
5	To strengthen and share capacity for deep-ocean stewardship
6	To ensure that all DOSI's actions are underpinned by principles of Social Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, and Environmental Justice

Table 1: Summary of the activities undertaken over the past 12 months which contribute towards the achievement of our Strategic Objectives

Activity in 2025-26 towards DOSI Strategic Objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6
Held regular DOSI Core Team, Steering Committee and DOSI Office meetings to ensure everyone is up to date with activities, members' needs, issues arising, and to motivate the team to value their roles and responsibilities within DOSI						
9 further funding proposals for specific DOSI Working Groups and activities. 7 successful, 2 currently under review						
Continued to build succession into our leadership roles to achieve long-term effective transformational change (1 new Working Group lead and 4 new Steering Committee members - 3 are ECOPs)						
Monitored and reviewed all DOSI actions to ensure they are in line with our guiding principles and internal policies on equity, diversity, inclusivity which are at the core of our operations						
Revised and developed internal policies to guide Core Team and network members						

Table 1 (continued)

Provided advice to promote sustainable management and conservation of the deep ocean (e.g. REMP for NW Pacific; workshops, other meetings below)					
Enabled 41 established and early-career ocean professionals (majority from underrepresented groups) to engage in-person at 29 policy processes or events					
Produced 16 written documents, including Policy Briefs and peer-reviewed publications, to inform deep-ocean conservation policy					
Captured DOSI Ambassador Feedback and DOSI Event Participation Feedback to aid our internal review process to capture impact and identify any issues					
Progressed the DOSI UN Decade programme Challenger 150, with many DOSI Core Team members engaged in deep-sea-related programmes of the Decade					
Undertook capacity sharing initiatives (e.g. China Workshop, IUCN WCC Speedy Learning Event, bespoke training and mentoring offered to DOSI Ambassadors prior to attending UN meetings, capacity session for the Ocean Youth Constituency and UN Major Group for Children and Youth)					
Continued the provision of reliable and accessible deep-ocean knowledge in a variety of formats, and to a variety of audiences, with targeted outputs such as DOSI Working Group explanatory videos, <i>Think Deep!</i> podcast series, weekly Round-Up, Monthly Core Team bulletins, twice-yearly Deep-Sea Life publication and taking part in seminars and webinars					
Continued to expand the DOSI network, from 3,650 subscribers from 115 countries in June 2025 to 3,948 subscribers in June 2026					
Expanded DOSI's presence on social media platforms (BlueSky account has grown from 3,374 followers to 4,426, Instagram gained 2,100 new followers to recently reach >9,100, LinkedIn followers up by >50% from 1,528 to 3,456 and Facebook from 2,700 to 4,400). Given rising concerns over the platform X (formerly Twitter), we have paused active posting and engagement there.					

Key Pillars

DOSI's key objectives align with three distinct pillars:

- (1) **Informing and influencing policy**
- (2) **Building the DOSI community**
- (3) **Cultivating capacity of those who wish to engage**

Through proactive engagement with policy processes, DOSI informs and influences policy in a variety of fora. DOSI mobilises the growing global deep-ocean community to engage in policy processes to achieve informed, sustainable deep-ocean management. DOSI works hard to cultivate capacity in myriad ways, from deep-ocean awareness mechanisms for scientists, policy makers and others, to mentoring during UN processes and during other activities such as written text production and direct career advice. We summarise below some of the key outputs and progress around these elements that have been achieved in this reporting period.

(1) Informing and Influencing Policy

DOSI continues to build its positive reputation at the science-policy interface, engaging proactively with different stakeholders and advocating for science as a strong basis for regulations. DOSI continues to enable many voices to be heard.

DOSI supported over 53 places for Ambassador attendance at 29 key meetings last year. These places were filled by 41 individuals, 78% of whom were women, and 54% were ECOPs. Together, they represented 21 different countries, 38% of which being classed as LMICs. Below we list the notable meetings in which DOSI Ambassadors have participated. The next section, **Activities of the DOSI Working Groups**, outlines those events that relate directly to our Working Group activities. Participation reports for all of our meetings are available upon request.

- **July 2025** - DOSI were invited to participate in the 33rd session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Assembly in Paris. DOSI is registered as a partner organisation and our DOSI Ambassadors were DOSI Steering Committee members and ECOPs Christine Gaebel and Maila Guilhon. Approximately 100 people attended. Matters related to the deep ocean remained poorly explored, with no focus on the deep ocean, its biodiversity, ecosystem services or cumulative impacts that may risk its integrity and health. We will continue to engage in this Assembly with the goal of bringing more deep-ocean topics into focus.

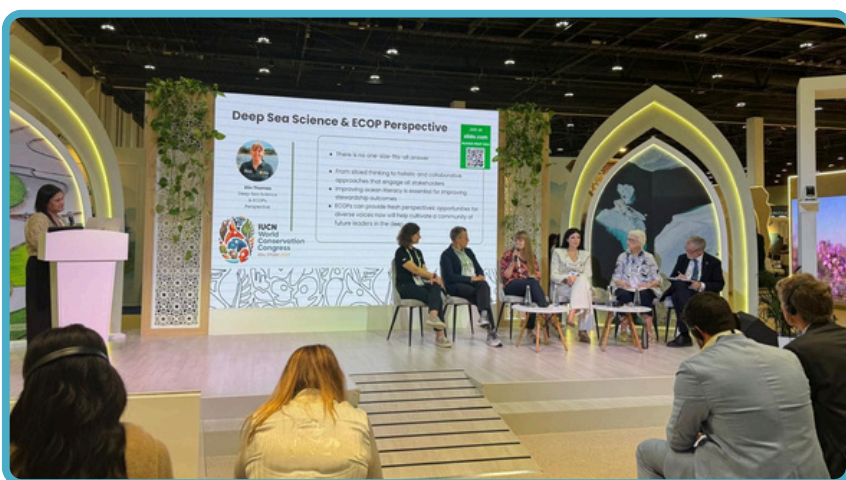


DOSI Ambassadors and Steering Committee members attend the IOC UNESCO Assembly in Paris.

- **July 2025** - Chris Barrio Froján provided information to an All-Party Parliamentary Group inquiry (UK) into sustainable ocean policy.

"The Minister is grateful for sight of the policy briefs attached in your email and for your organisation's continued efforts in spearheading the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative." - Lee-Anne Yarr, International Maritime Policy Manager, Ocean Policy Unit, Legal Directorate

- **August 2025** - Moriaki Yasuhara, DOSI Climate Change Working Group co-lead, participated in the 3rd International Conference on Biodiversity, Ecology and Conservation of Marine Ecosystems in Hong Kong.
- **October 2025** - DOSI members participated in the IUCN World Conservation Conference in Abu Dhabi, which brought together ~10,000 participants from 189 countries. DOSI's presence at the Congress included a booth in the exhibition hall, a 'speedy learning' event, participation in several panel events, and providing scientific information for two deep-sea-related Motions of the IUCN Members' Assembly.



DOSI Ambassadors and members attend the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi.

"They put forward the latest science, not only in Kingston [ISA] but everywhere else as well...so there is a really excellent science-policy network, so thank you [to Kristina] for giving Earth such an excellent initiative." - Minna Epps, Director of IUCN Global Marine and Polar Programme, speaking about DOSI during an IUCN Congress panel event

- **October 2025** - Members of the DOSI Steering Committee were invited to deliver online talks at a workshop on deep-sea ecology and sustainability which was organised by our Chinese DOSI Advisory Board member, Fengping Wang.



China deep-sea ecology and sustainability workshop.

- **October 2025** - DOSI Executive Director, Maria Baker, and Minerals Working Group co-lead, Sabine Gollner, were invited to participate in the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA) Summit, which brought together ~1,000 researchers, diplomats, ministers, representatives of the private sector and philanthropists to discuss the challenges posed by new technologies and their impact on people's lives. We ensured that deep ocean science and policy was conveyed in discussions via panels and workshop participation. We hope to participate again in October 2026.



Sabine Gollner speaking at the GESDA Summit.

- **November 2025** - Christine Gaebel, Lisa Levin, and Maria Baker initiated a collaboration with the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) to produce a deep-ocean synthesis of the Third World Ocean Assessment ([WOA3](#)). A new Task Force was formed comprising experts from across the DOSI network who have engaged in, or are interested in, the WOA. Work is ongoing, but is expected to lead to a synthesis report, Policy Brief, and associated outreach activities.
- **February 2026** - DOSI had a strong presence at the Ocean Sciences Meeting in Glasgow, hosting an exhibition booth and a Town Hall event titled 'Deep-Ocean Science as the Foundation for a Thriving Global Ocean'. The Town Hall was well attended, and generated stimulating discussions on cooperation amongst ocean research programmes with the involvement of all stakeholders, the benefits of endorsement by the Ocean Decade initiative, and the wish for future scenarios where the deep ocean is as well-understood as shallower or terrestrial ecosystems. Panellists representing various Ocean Decade programmes summarised their activities to date whilst highlighting the relevance of their work to policy. The session was introduced and co-moderated by Maria Baker and Eva Ramirez-Llodra, assisted by Michelle Guraieb, and included a touching tribute to DOSI co-founder Kristina Gjerde, who inspired and championed many of the activities represented in the session, as well as countless individuals attending OSM.



Left: Visitors to the DOSI booth during the Ocean Sciences Meeting in Glasgow. Right: DOSI members attending Ocean Sciences Meeting in Glasgow and participating in the DOSI Town Hall session.

*"Thank you so much for your big efforts for such a marvellous DOSI session!"
- Fengping Wang, Distinguished Professor, Shanghai JiaoTong University*

- **June 2026** - DOSI participated in the High-Level Mission Neptune Forum in Paris on 8 June and has been invited to become a partner of the Mission to help guide science-policy interactions, which we are considering.
- **June 2026** - DOSI Ambassadors, Tracy Kadessa, Anthony Akpan, Agnes Muthumbi and SC member, Jeff Ardron, participated in the Our Ocean Conference, Kenya. This is the first time the conference has been held in Africa.



Neptune Mission Forum, Paris.

(2) Building the DOSI Community

- In the past 12 months, DOSI network subscribers have increased from 3,650 to 3,948.
- We have raised engagement across DOSI social media platforms (BlueSky, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram). Our LinkedIn following has grown by over 50% in the last year. Many in our community have moved across from X formerly Twitter to alternative platforms. Due to concerns regarding the use of Grok on X, we decided to stop active engagement with X in January. Although our following on X has continued to increase from 6,895 last June to 7,046 this is a slow increase compared to active use. We have kept the account live to avoid risk of impersonation but no longer actively post and engage via the platform. Increased engagement across other platforms, particularly LinkedIn, potentially reflects a shift in platform usage from our followers too.
- Internal DOSI monthly bulletins keep all Core Team members up to date with current and planned activities and new collaborations have emerged between Working Groups as a result.



From top left: ECOP recruits Christine Gaebel (Steering Committee and BBNJ co-lead), Beatriz Naranjo Elizondo (Steering Committee) and Natalya Gallo (Climate Change co-lead), and Jeff Ardron and Hannah Lily join the DOSI Steering Committee.

- We recruited 2 ECOPs to the DOSI Steering Committee this year: Beatriz Naranjo Elizondo (Costa Rica) and Christine Gaebel (Canada/UK), and ECOP Natalya Gallo (Norway) has joined the Climate Change Working Group leadership team. We also welcomed 2 seasoned DOSI members to our Steering Committee: Jeff Ardron (Canada/Kenya) and Hannah Lily (UK); both have been with DOSI in various positions from the start and can help guide our strategic direction from a formal position in the team.
- The weekly Deep-Sea Round-Up is a firm favourite output for our global community, keeping everyone up to date on the latest deep-sea science, policy, news, meetings and opportunities. The audience has expanded by almost 300 subscribers in the last 12 months.
- The biannual informal publication in partnership with the Deep-Sea Biology Society, Deep-Sea Life, also continues to earn positive feedback, with Issues 25 and 26 providing in-depth news about current research projects and cruises, events and opportunities from around the world.

*"Thanks for all you do in facilitating this important newsletter!"
- Ryan Gasbarro, Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of California*

- DOSI Digital Officer, Bernadette Butfield, keeps the DOSI website, BlueSky and LinkedIn channels up to date by providing an excellent knowledge base for new activities, outputs, and news blogs. These continue to be important resources for our membership and beyond.
- The weekly Deep-Sea Round-Up is a firm favourite output for our global community, keeping everyone up to date on the latest deep-sea science, policy, news, meetings and opportunities. The audience has expanded by almost 300 subscribers in the last 12 months.
- A range of media outlets, NGOs, academic institutions and other stakeholders contact DOSI as a "go to" authority for advice on deep-ocean issues. Recent and varied examples include:
 - For the second year running, Programme Officer Chris Barrio Froján presented "The Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI): the role of deep-sea science in ocean governance" for the University of Southampton Business School's Master's course on Managing Global Challenges. He also presented DOSI at the University of Southampton's Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences 'Science Day' and during the 2026 National Oceanography Centre Open Day.
 - Communications Manager, Elin Thomas, was interviewed about the deep ocean in Welsh for Aled Hughes' show on BBC Radio Cymru. Elin spoke about the importance of the deep ocean, our connection to this environment, and her personal experiences of studying the deep ocean, including working with DOSI. She has been invited back to discuss recent deep-sea discoveries on the show.
 - DOSI received an invitation to partner with the French government's new Mission Neptune because they recognise that DOSI could lend practical and academic support to their mission. We are currently considering their invitation.



DOSI stand at the 2026 National Oceanography Centre, Southampton Open Day.

(3) Cultivating Capacity

DOSI continues working towards excellence in cultivating capacity, especially with respect to those from underrepresented groups, including ECOPs, those from LMICs and women. DOSI continues to receive recognition and praise for addressing the lack of women speakers at UN meetings and swaying the gender balance. Activities that help us in our mission to cultivate capacity this year include:

- New Policy Engagement Guidance, which is shared with all DOSI Ambassadors before their mission.
- Work towards a new tailored EDI strategy, linked to our existing policy, to bring together diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, perspectives and beliefs to achieve DOSI goals.
- A new accessible Podcast series called *Think Deep!*, which aims to reach DOSI members and beyond who may be new to the science-policy world.
- Short introductory videos for all the DOSI Working Groups and Task Forces that we share widely to help people to understand the key deep-ocean stewardship issues that affect the deep ocean.
- Dedicated workshops in areas lacking deep-ocean stewardship knowledge.
- Bespoke training and mentoring offered to DOSI Ambassadors, including ECOPs, women, and researchers from underrepresented regions, prior to attending UN meetings (e.g. DOSI's BBNJ Working Group Ambassadors attending BBNJ PrepCom sessions).

The DOSI ECOPs engagement strategy project, started in 2023 and led by ECOPs Vanessa Lopez, Maila Guilhon, and Mariana Caldeira, that set out to enhance ECOP involvement with the science-to-policy interface through the DOSI network, published an [associated paper](#) in June 2026. We plan to instigate a new DOSI ECOPs Working Group in future, led by ECOPs. Discussions are underway, but this initiative will depend on securing further funding.

During the Ocean Sciences Meeting, Elva Escobar Briones (Steering Committee member) was awarded the 2026 Mentoring Award from The Oceanography Society. Elva was recognised for her exceptional and sustained leadership in mentoring, teaching, and advancing equity and capacity building in ocean science. She has dedicated time to supporting and inspiring generations of students and early-career researchers, expanding access to deep-sea science across Latin America and beyond. Read more about the award [here](#).

"At a time when the deep ocean is emerging as one of the most critical frontiers for both knowledge and governance, the leadership of the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative in advancing science-based stewardship is more essential than ever. The work of DOSI is uniquely essential. DOSI contributes to shaping a more informed, precautionary and responsible approach to one of the most sensitive components of the Earth system. Because the future of ocean governance will depend on our ability to understand and protect what we cannot yet fully see, we would be honoured to associate DOSI with this endeavour." - Ashok Adicéam, Executive Director, Mission Neptune.

Policy and Outreach Impacts

DOSI continues to be the world's largest network dedicated to deep-ocean science, policy and stewardship. Despite the difficulties associated with quantifiable metrics, as discussed in previous reports, we do our best to capture values where possible. From 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026:

- Invitations to events to share our expertise, along with successful proposals for engagement at high-level events, indicate that our presence, approach and knowledge are valued and respected. This year DOSI has participated in 28 key events, including at UNFCCC COP30 and SB64, Annual sessions of the International Seabed Authority, BBNJ PrepCom 2 & 3, CBD SBSTTA, IPBES, IOC-UNESCO and the IUCN World Conservation Congress.
- We collate DOSI Ambassador metrics along with information on members of our Core Team, Working Group leads, speakers and those who engage in written and oral outputs. This demonstrates our continued commitment to engage underrepresented groups from a wide geographic scope, who participate and lead in DOSI's mission, helping to close deep-ocean knowledge gaps. Underrepresented groups include ECOPs, Ambassadors from LMICs and women. The DOSI Core Team of 51 members is currently made up of 26% ECOPs, 74% women, representing 25 different countries. This year, 65% of in-person DOSI Ambassadors have been ECOPs. Over 100 people have worked on DOSI written outputs this year, the majority from underrepresented groups.
- DOSI Event Feedback Forms gather feedback from the audience of DOSI Side Events and presentations. Responses in the past year have been overwhelmingly positive, with respondents valuing the content, relevance, and usefulness of the events attended.
- An Ambassador Feedback Form gathers feedback from in-person DOSI Ambassadors after they have completed their mission. Responses this year have been positive, with Ambassadors valuing the new streamlined processes (e.g. travel/accommodation booking, insurance provision, expenses claims, reporting) that enable their work while on mission. This form also helps identify ways in which we can better prepare DOSI Ambassadors for effective, safe, and meaningful experiences communicating deep-ocean science.
- A post-mission reporting template gathers any mentions of DOSI during international meetings (interventions, submitted comments, Policy Briefs, presentation content) in draft legal and policy texts, delegate interventions, oral support from delegations, workshop reports or high-level deliberations.
- Anecdotal evidence (e.g. appreciation of DOSI by fellow delegates who like the scientific information provided by DOSI Ambassadors) is captured for qualitative assessment of our impact for reporting purposes.
- DOSI and partners have secured funding for knowledge exchange initiatives, for example, further funding from Synchronicity Earth for DOSI Communications, and funds from the Vanuatu Government to attend a meeting to discuss a new initiative.
- A further measure of impact is that of individuals who engage with DOSI and progress to DOSI leadership roles and/or to represent their country delegations at UN events. We have previously reported many examples, but this year we have 4 members progressing to DOSI leadership roles. In addition, Júlia Schütz Veiga represented Brazil at BBNJ PrepCom3, Cherisse du Preez represented Canada during ISA REMP workshop, Natalya Gallo represented Norway during UNFCCC SB64, Sabine Gollner represented the Netherlands at the ISA, and Anna Metaxas was a delegate for Canada at the CBD SBSTTA 27.

Public Communication Outputs

DOSI continues to increase deep-ocean literacy across multiple platforms, driving the science-policy agenda. From 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026:

- Following the success of the first season of the DOSI podcast, [Think Deep! - 'Decoding Deep-Ocean Science and Policy'](#) (available on [Spotify](#) & [YouTube](#)), released last June and already reaching over 9,000 listeners, Michelle Guraieb (podcast host and editor) continues to work with Communications Manager, Elin Thomas, to produce a second season, which is scheduled for release in July 2026. This new season, funded by Synchronicity Earth, is intended to highlight 'Deep-Ocean Voices Around the World', bringing together new perspectives for deep-ocean stewardship and focusing on the challenges and opportunities from different regions of the ocean. The season will comprise 8 episodes, each featuring two guests representing the region in focus, and aims to showcase deep-ocean science from around the world, introduce regional policy frameworks and practices, and platform diverse voices to share their connection with the deep ocean. The podcast has created a more inclusive and informed community of deep-ocean stewards.



"I loved how very technical details were explained in language we can all understand and in an easy to follow format! 🙌 thank you for your great work raising ocean conservation awareness!!!"

"I love this podcast! The big takeaway for me was from episode 1, that we use the deep ocean every day without realizing it."

- comments from listeners during the book giveaway competition on Instagram

- In response to requests from the deep-sea community concerning a desire to learn more about DOSI's Working Groups, their activities and how to get involved, Communications Manager Elin Thomas worked with YouTuber Leo Richards of Natural World Facts to produce a series of short introductory videos for each of the DOSI Working Groups and Task Forces. The videos are designed to be helpful communication tools during meetings and events, to share with various stakeholders, introduce a more general audience to key topics and the work that DOSI is doing, and encourage new members to join and engage with our Working Group members. So far, 6 videos have been produced, one each for our focus areas of [deep-sea fishing](#), [deep-sea mining](#), [climate change](#), [marine genetic resources](#), the [BBNJ Agreement](#) and [deep-sea biodiversity](#). Collectively, they have attracted over 6,000 online views to date, in addition to hundreds of audience members during in-person meetings. They have been produced as evergreen products, so we fully expect these view rates to rise as they will be distributed in future meetings and events.
- 3 Policy Briefs and 1 Information Sheet have been created and delivered to policy audiences. They cover topics including the value of marine genetic resources, the need for a precautionary approach in the twilight zone, coherence in implementing the BBNJ Agreement, and how to engage with the BBNJ Agreement as a marine scientist.
- To increase accessibility and reach for our written resources, we have also undertaken translations of some of our Policy Briefs. This includes translating our popular introductory Policy Brief ['What does the deep-ocean do for you?'](#) into [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Arabic](#), with plans underway to translate this resource to Russian and Chinese so that it is available in all 6 UN languages. We further translated the June 2025 Policy Brief ['Aligning climate and biodiversity action in the deep ocean to protect the planet'](#) into [French](#) and [Spanish](#) prior to BBNJ PrepCom 3.
- The DOSI Office produced a new DOSI brochure, which has been distributed to potential funders and others who have a significant interest in the work of DOSI. It is also available online [here](#) in a flip-book format.

- The DOSI [Instagram](#) platform continues to grow, and our voluntary ECOP Instagram team works hard to keep the followers engaged. Overall, the DOSI Instagram profile has evolved into a dynamic and rapidly growing platform, combining consistent output with creative reels and posts to expand reach, deepen engagement, and strengthen its global community interested in the deep ocean.
 - Since July 2025, the DOSI Instagram profile has experienced sustained growth, now exceeding 9,100 followers and gaining over 2,100 new followers over the past year. Growth has been particularly strong in recent months, with more than 200 new followers added each month since April 2026. Engagement across content has also been significant. In the past three months, DOSI content has generated 418,740 views, alongside 11,000 likes on posts and 9,400 likes on reels. Audience interaction remains strong, with over 350 comments across posts and reels, often expressing enthusiasm and curiosity about deep-sea topics.
 - Strategic content initiatives have played a key role in this success. The Deep-sea Species Showdown, inspired by the US March Madness basketball tournaments, invited audiences to vote for their favourite deep-sea species through multiple rounds. This interactive campaign ran during March 2026 and was highly successful, driving strong interaction, with the [Phantom Jellyfish](#) ultimately crowned as the community favourite.
 - Since July 2025, 22 reels have been shared, proving particularly effective in reaching new audiences. Two standout reels significantly boosted visibility and follower growth. A reel on bone-eating worms in whale fall ecosystems achieved 73,287 views, 3,400 likes, 511 shares, and directly led to 280 new followers. Another reel on the first in situ observations of goblin sharks reached 54,265 views, 4,600 likes, 819 shares, and generated 227 new followers.
 - We have also held two book giveaways. The first, in August 2025, featured *Deep Sea: 10 Things You Should Know* by Professor Jon Copley in celebration of the release of the *Think Deep!* Podcast. The current giveaway, launched to celebrate World Ocean Day on 8 June 2026, features *The Dark Frontier: Unlocking the Secrets of the Deep Sea* by Dr Jeffrey Marlow and has already attracted over 200 entries as of 22 June. Importantly, this second giveaway is providing valuable insights into audience interests, as participants share topics about the deep ocean they want to learn more about, directly informing future content strategy.
 - Behind this progress is a strengthened and evolving team. In October 2025, two new members, Júlia Grinyó and Sierra Landreth, joined the Instagram team, bringing fresh energy and new ideas. At the same time, Laura Anthony stepped down from her role. As DOSI's first social media volunteer, Laura played a key role in shaping the voice and presence of DOSI's Instagram profile and building its early foundation upon which current success continues to grow.

Looking Ahead

This time last year, we were hoping to secure further funding for several activities, including our continued engagement at the International Seabed Authority and the continued employment of our communications team. I am pleased to report that we successfully raised funding for 3 more years from Synchronicity Earth, who generously continue to support our communications, and 3 smaller grants can support travel to and events at the ISA meetings and beyond, at least for the coming year. We also secured significant funding for the deep-sea science community through our Challenger 150 programme, which includes funding for DOSI to host a science-policy workshop in 2027/8. We will continue to work in the coming months to secure further funding for our new ECOPs Task Force and further Working Group requirements such as long-term funding for the Minerals Working Group, DOSI travel funding, workshops and more. As we are hiring our new Operations Manager, it will be essential that we find further travel funding, as we will not be able to use the staffing budget from Arcadia for travel from now on.

DOSI sees many opportunities on the horizon in the next 12 months. July will be a busy month with members of the Minerals Working Group heading back to Jamaica to participate in the critical negotiations at the 31st Session of the ISA, where they will also host a scientific Side Event for delegates, in collaboration with the BBNJ Working Group. Governance of deep seabed mining sits in the balance this year, with an autumn meeting scheduled for October/November 2026 looking like it may be an ultimate deadline given external pressures from the US and mining industries. Fisheries Working Group Ambassadors will attend a bottom fishing workshop in NYC that will feature DOSI work, Minerals Working Group colleagues have been invited to participate in a global conference on the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development in Paris, and nominations are underway for a DOSI representative to take part in the CBD SBSTTA28 in Kenya and in the upcoming IPBES meeting to discuss the future work of IPBES. In September, DOSI members will participate in the Deep Ocean Observing Strategy Accelerator meeting in San Diego, where there will also be an opportunity to talk with funders about their future deep-ocean exploration plans, and where DOSI will deliver a BBNJ Treaty Town Hall event as a mid-way point for the workshop. Other significant events where we plan for DOSI representation include the UNFCCC COP31, the World Conference on Marine Biodiversity and the International Marine Conservation Congress – all in November. Preparations are also underway for the first BBNJ COP at the start of 2027, followed by the UN Ocean Decade Conference in April, where we plan to once again lead the deep-ocean science community in science-policy action (funding permitting).

More ocean-related organisations are now recognising the need to have a joined-up approach to ocean governance. DOSI has been considering the interlinkages for some years and stands ready to continue with this approach.

Despite the global turmoil in which we all find ourselves, dedicated staff, leads, and members of the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative continue to work hard towards DOSI's goal to further deep-ocean science in policy through numerous stakeholders to persuade global leaders to make the most sensible choices for the future of the planet. In DOSI, we keep each other going, with empathy for those who must pause when necessary, but to collectively drive on. The energy, passion, and dedication of our voluntary DOSI members really is quite extraordinary. We sincerely thank you for enabling us to continue with the DOSI mission for this coming year and subsequent years.

Activities of the DOSI Working Groups

DOSI Working Groups consist of hundreds of proactive DOSI members who specialise in specific topics of concern related to the deep ocean. Each DOSI Working Group operates independently but with a close eye on activities by other Working Groups to ensure a consistency of approach, as many issues are cross-cutting. Below are the salient activities of each DOSI Working Group over the past year. Please note that full activity reports and submissions are available upon request.

Minerals Working Group



International Seabed Authority March 2026 - DOSI Scientific Side Event

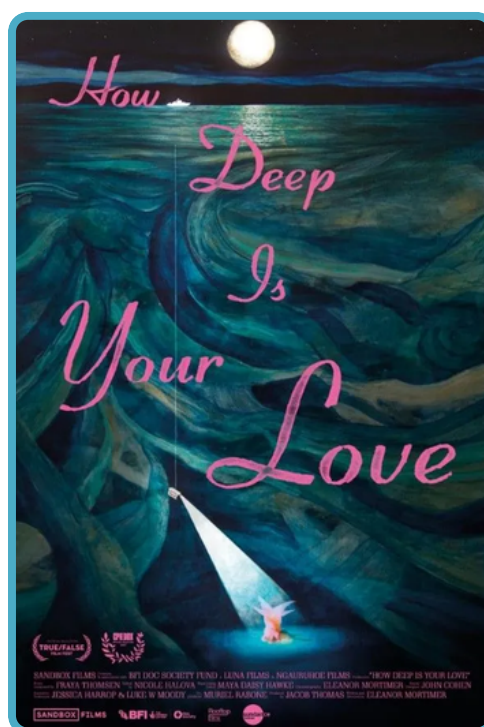
Summary

- Governance of deep seabed mining is in the balance, and there is increasing urgency around the finalisation of the work of the ISA mining code. We expect to see some form of shift towards finalisation this coming year, with an additional ISA session scheduled for October.
- In the past 12 months we have continued to focus on strengthening the science voice at the ISA and in relevant workshops, via our DOSI delegation, Working Group member engagement and Side Events. A DOSI delegation proactively engaged in both of the ISA annual sessions in July 2025 and March 2026 and at the regional workshops of the ISA.
- Working Group members contributed to numerous written outputs and also undertook specialised training around deep seabed minerals environmental issues.
- **July 2025** - A new book chapter entitled [Deep-Seabed Mining: Environmental Knowledge and Implications for Use and Non-use of the Deep Sea](#) was authored by Sabine Gollner, Patricia Esquete and Jesse van der Grient (Minerals Working Group leadership team) in the book: [Non-use Measures for Global Goods and Commons in International Law](#).
- **July 2025** - A DOSI delegation of 8 attended Part II of the 30th Session of the ISA in Kingston, Jamaica, and the delegation was supported by a team of DOSI experts online. Formal interventions to the proceedings were made, with some seconded and supported by other delegations. DOSI prepared, printed, and distributed copies of the following Policy Briefs: a) The Mitigation Hierarchy: Polymetallic Nodules and Sulphides; b) Implementing a 'Sufficient Information Requirement' for deep-sea Mining. DOSI delegates were invited to participate in a meeting held with the Secretary General to discuss the present and future of the institution. A new DOSI introductory video titled [Deep-Sea Mining: What's the Story?](#) was shown during the session, which proved to be popular. DOSI also hosted a Side Event: "10 Years of Science on Mining Impact & Environmental Protection" to align with our 10 years of DOSI observer status at ISA. The event was well-attended and brought together scientists, policymakers & artists for reflection & storytelling.



DOSI and NGO colleagues busy at work at the ISA, July 2025.

- The science event was followed by a sound-immersion performance, which took participants on an intimate journey into a deep-sea expedition. This was organised in collaboration with DOSI's new Art, Science and Policy Task Force. This group also showed a screening of the film "How Deep Is Your Love". All of these events attracted a large audience.



"For a lawyer, it is incredibly positive to be among DOSI experts. The skills we acquired are highly beneficial to our own research areas, and the interface between law and policy is of great necessity." - Laisa Branco, Brazil

"Where to begin? DOSI has been a huge inspiration to my work, opening up new collaborations, new ways of thinking about topics, and most importantly, recognising how my work can be incorporated in science-policy. I have truly enjoyed developing my science-policy angle in my work, and I am not sure this would have been possible, or as pleasant, if it was not for, by and through DOSI. DOSI gives me energy and inspiration!"
- Jesse van der Grient, Netherlands

- **July 2025** - Global Negotiations Conference - Following a competitive application process, DOSI sponsored ECOP Cara James (PhD student studying environmental impacts of deep-sea mining and member of the DOSI Minerals Working Group who is keen to progress in science-policy in her career) to participate in this training conference with interactive workshops on negotiation basics, conflict resolution, international/multilateral negotiations, mediation, power dynamics and more. This year's conference centred around deep-sea mining, hence the interest in this training for DOSI ECOPs.
- **July 2025** - DOSI sent a briefing letter to the ISA to express concern regarding rushed negotiations of the draft exploitation regulations, which would undermine science-based decision-making. Our concerns centred on the need to provide sufficient time to develop science-based environmental regulations. The regulatory framework of the ISA has over 30 major outstanding issues, including at least nine relevant to the environment, which DOSI addressed in the letter.
- **August 2025** - DOSI Minerals Working Group submitted a formal response to the US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) regarding commercial leasing for critical minerals on the outer continental shelf near American Samoa. The submission raised key environmental and governance considerations. The group has since followed up with comments on potential applications for deep-sea mining in the same region, reinforcing the importance of precautionary management and ecosystem protection.
- **September 2025** - DOSI Minerals Working Group member Rachel Jeffreys raised awareness of DOSI's work at a meeting of the UK Deep-Seabed Mining DEFRA group.
- **September 2025** - DOSI Minerals Working Group co-lead, Patricia Esquete, represented DOSI in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's Four Corners documentary, [The Trillion-Dollar Race to Mine the Ocean Floor](#). The documentary, broadcast nationally, explored the debate around deep-sea mining and featured DOSI as a credible scientific and policy voice on the issue. The YouTube version has >86K views.



ECOP Cara James practiced her negotiation skills during an interactive workshop at the Global Negotiations Conference.

- **November 2025** - DOSI submitted a consultancy bid to ISA to shape a global deep-sea research agenda, strengthening the science-policy interface. Although DOSI was selected as the best candidate, we did not feel we could proceed as the terms of the contract did not fit with our values and mission. We suggested they may wish to review and revise their stakeholder engagement document and guidelines relating to equity and inclusion. Nevertheless, we are now pursuing a similar goal with the Vanuatu Government.
- **December 2025** - DOSI submitted a comment to the BOEM request for information regarding the potential leasing of the Outer Continental Shelf of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.
- **December 2025** - The National Ocean Protection Coalition (USA) and the Marine Conservation Institute reached out to request our Treasures of the Deep Children's book on deep-seabed mining to distribute around the American Samoa region, highlighting its value as an outreach tool.
- **March 2026** - DOSI participated in the first part of the 31st session of the Council of the ISA. The DOSI delegation consisted of 3 scientists who were further supported by experts contributing remotely. Over the course of the session, the DOSI delegation delivered seven formal interventions across plenary and informal discussions. These contributions focused on ensuring that 1) Environmental standards are robust and precautionary; 2) Regulations reflect independent, peer-reviewed science; 3) Deep-sea biodiversity, ecosystem functions, and services are adequately considered; 4) Potential ecological impacts of deep-sea mining are fully understood and addressed. These interventions were frequently referenced by Council members in subsequent discussions, highlighting the importance of science-informed dialogue in shaping the regulatory framework. Read our [blog](#) for updates from the session. DOSI distributed copies of the Policy Briefs: "The mitigation hierarchy: Polymetallic nodules and massive sulphides" and "Implementing a 'sufficient information requirement' for deep-sea mining".



DOSI Ambassadors Samantha Robb, Victoria Assad and Patricia Esquete at the ISA March 2026.

- **May/June 2026** - Tremain Bowman was nominated by DOSI and selected to attend the 4th training workshop of the ISA-China Joint Training and Research Centre.
- **May 2026** - SMARTEX Meeting with policy panel. DOSI was represented at the SMARTEX meeting at the Natural History Museum in London, with many DOSI members in attendance, strengthening links between science and policy communities. Dan Jones (Offshore Energy Working Group co-lead) led much of the meeting which was informative and thought-provoking. The SMARTEX project is a UK Natural Environment Research Council-funded initiative aimed at understanding the deep-sea mining of polymetallic nodules in the Clarion Clipperton Zone.

- **May 2026** - Minerals Working Group members were invited to submit contributions to the chapter on deep-seabed mining in the [Encyclopedia of Ocean Sciences](#).
- **May 2026** - DOSI had strong representation at the ISA North West Pacific Regional Environmental Management Planning (REMP), which took place in Busan, Republic of Korea. Through DOSI support, Cherisse du Preez participated in the meeting as one of 30 invited experts. She represented the Canadian Government and DOSI interests. Ana Colaço participated on behalf of DOSI, reinforcing our critical role in regional environmental management discussions.



DOSI Minerals Working Group members who participated in the REMP for Northwest Pacific Ocean (left to right): Elisabetta Menini, Malcolm Clark, Se Jong Ju, Verena Tunncliffe, Ana Colaço, Danielle de Jonge, Cherisse du Preez.

"Maria – thank you again for helping make my participation in this last REMP workshop possible. I'm so grateful I could contribute and help the REMP more towards being "science-based." We had some big wins and some frustrating losses. All in all, I truly feel, if DOSI folks weren't in the room, the region, its animals, and the surrounding nations would be worse for it." - Cherisse du Preez, Canada

- **June 2026** - DOSI contributions to the ISA Gender Charter stakeholder consultation. 62 members reviewed and responded in detail to this call, and the ISA secretariat was most grateful for our extensive engagement.

"Thank you very much for your interest in and willingness to contribute to the Gender Charter document. It was truly wonderful to read your enthusiasm and to learn that the DOSI network is interested in contributing. I also wanted to jump in here to say how pleased we are to be able to increase engagement with such important stakeholders as DOSI, PEW and others. It is our intention, as we have expressed in our stakeholder breakfasts, to build every opportunity we can to meaningfully engage and benefit from your valuable experience."

"DOSI's comments on the draft have been very valuable, particularly in light of your members' extensive expertise in offshore scientific research and ocean expeditions."

- ISA Secretariat, Jamaica

BBNJ Working Group



DOSI BBNJ PrepCom2 Delegation from left to right: Ina Tessnow Von Wysocki, Renee Richa Hill-Lewenilovo, Julia Schutz Veiga, Tracy Kadessa, Christine Gaebel, Beatriz Naranjo Elizondo.

Summary

- The BBNJ Working Group has kept abreast of the next stages of the BBNJ Agreement, following through the ratification and heading towards the implementation process. More than 80 countries have now ratified the BBNJ Agreement as of mid-2026, with global engagement from many stakeholders to assist in putting the next steps in place. DOSI is well positioned and ready to advise on scientific aspects of BBNJ as this movement progresses and continues to position itself as a source of trusted and objective scientific information and knowledge.
 - This past year, DOSI delegations participated in PrepComs 2 and 3 and are now preparing for the first BBNJ COP in January 2027.
 - The BBNJ Working Group contributed to a variety of activities including workshops, conference presentations, publications, Policy Briefs, and training materials relevant for BBNJ scientific aspects.
-
- **July 2025** - Working Group co-lead, Christine Gaebel, attended the 33rd session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Assembly, where she engaged with delegations regarding IOC-BBNJ interactions and opportunities.
 - **July 2025** - BBNJ workshop in Aberdeen, Scotland – Marcel Jaspars co-organised a BBNJ workshop titled “Implementing the new UN BBNJ Treaty: a deep dive on the value of MGR, BBNJ Batch Identifiers and obligations on scientists”. The event was held in Aberdeen with panel discussions such as “The Value of Marine Genetic Resources” and “What’s in it for scientists – advantages of taking part in BBNJ”. DOSI BBNJ Working Group members participated, and DOSI supported attendance for members from LMICs. Working Group co-lead Christine Gaebel provided a presentation on the emerging science-policy interface and associated institutional arrangements established under the BBNJ Agreement.

“I am writing to you at this time to let you know that I have not stopped working to advance the gain of my participation in the Aberdeen BBNJ Symposium. My participation was an investment that I strongly value and appreciate. I can not thank DOSI and you two enough for my invitation. You changed my involvement in BBNJ preparatory meetings for good and made contributions Africawide more meaningful. As such, I am strongly motivated and committed to become actively involved with DOSI. Since my return to Lagos, my colleagues and I have begun to work on what we can do locally beyond mere advocacy to getting researchers and professionals actively involved in BBNJ treaty implementation.” - Olusola Adeoye, Nigeria

- **July 2025** - A publication by Working Group co-leads, Christine Gaebel and Harriet Harden Davies, provided the first peer-review analysis of the BBNJ Agreement's Clearing-House Mechanism (Gaebel C *et al.* [The BBNJ clearing-house mechanism: considerations for its diverse functions, users, and sources](#)).
- **August 2025** - Together with the MGR Working Group, the BBNJ Working Group released an Information Sheet on "[How to Engage and Contribute to the Implementation of the BBNJ Agreement as a Marine Scientist](#)". This practical guide provides clear steps for scientists wishing to contribute their expertise to BBNJ processes.
- **August 2025** - DOSI Ambassadors – experts from across North, Central, and South America, Europe, Africa, and Oceania – attended the second session of the BBNJ Preparatory Commission (PrepCom2) to help connect science and policy for the deep ocean. In particular, the DOSI team are closely following discussions on 1) the composition, design, and rules of procedure for the Scientific and Technical Body (STB); 2) the design and implementation of the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM). As cornerstones for how to mobilise science and knowledge under the BBNJ Agreement, an effective STB and CHM must not only serve global decision-making needs, but also reflect the realities of deep-ocean research – including its opportunities, challenges, and diversity of perspectives worldwide. As part of this work, Working Group Leads hosted pre-, during, and post-session meetings with DOSI Ambassadors to help develop and build their capacity to engage in international governance processes and meetings.



Left: DOSI BBNJ PrepCom2 Delegation (left to right): Aderito Sarmiento de Miranda, Beatriz Naranjo Elizondo, Ina Tessnow Von Wysocki, Muriel Rabone, Christine Gaebel, Paul Snelgrove. Right: DOSI Ambassadors preparing to take session notes at PrepCom2 (left to right): Beatriz Naranjo Elizondo, Tracy Kadessa, Ina Tessnow Von Wysocki.

- **November 2025** - Publication: [An actionable guide to the United Nations' Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement for research scientists](#), authored by Working Group co-leads Jeff Marlow and Harriet Harden-Davies (Marlow et al). This publication offers a practical guide for researchers hoping to understand how the BBNJ Agreement will impact their work upon entry into force, highlighting relevant requirements, recommendations, and opportunities. It highlights the many opportunities for researchers to support the Agreement's conservation and sustainability objectives through, for example, proposing marine protected areas, conducting environmental impact assessments, or joining technically oriented subsidiary bodies that will add practical detail to the Agreement's implementation in the years to come. Given the deep integration of science into the BBNJ Agreement, marine scientists aiming to work in ABNJ are ideally positioned to both benefit, and benefit from the Agreement's forward-looking objectives.

- **March 2026** - DOSI BBNJ Working Group co-lead Christine Gaebel and Working Group member Julia Schutz Veiga delivered a capacity-building session for the Ocean Youth Constituency and UN Major Group for Children and Youth. The session aimed to build and develop knowledge of the Clearing-House Mechanism and the current state-of-play regarding its design and establishment prior to youth members attending PrepCom3.
- **March 2026** - DOSI BBNJ Working Group co-lead Christine Gaebel, Working Group members Julia Schutz Veiga, Amelia Westmoreland, Mariana Caldeira, and DOSI members Eva Ramirez Llodra, Maila Guilhon, and Lisa Levin, attended the third BBNJ Symposium in Rio Brazil. Christine Gaebel, Julia Schutz Veiga, Mariana Caldeira, and Lisa Levin presented on panels across the event. Christine Gaebel attended an associated EU-hosted workshop on the BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism and Capacity Building. Working Group member Julia Schutz Veiga organised, presented, and moderated discussions at the workshop.



Left: DOSI members at the BBNJ Symposium: Mariana Caldeira, Maila Guilhon, Amelia Westmoreland, Lisa Levin, Eva Ramirez-Llodra, Christine Gaebel, Julia Schutz Veiga. Right: DOSI Working Group co-lead, Christine Gaebel (second from left), representing DOSI on a panel focused on the BBNJ Scientific and Technical Body alongside leading global science-policy experts.

- **April 2026** - DOSI BBNJ Working Group member contributions to new free online course "Using Science, Knowledge & Tools to operationalise the BBNJ Agreement" from UNEO Steering Committee, Ocean Teacher Global Academy. This online training introduces the BBNJ Agreement and focuses on the role that ocean science and knowledge play for its implementation, including implications for the global community and opportunities for science, services and management in and about ABNJ. DOSI BBNJ Working Group member, Ina Tessnow-von Wysocki, leads this work helping translate scientific expertise into practical training resources.
- **April 2026** - Six DOSI Ambassadors attended BBNJ PrepCom3 in New York, with strong representation from across the network. DOSI was further supported by other members contributing remotely, where the Working Group trialled a remote engagement strategy mixing remote note-taking, daily engagement with on-the-ground Ambassadors, and shared documentation. Whilst on mission, DOSI Ambassadors engaged with delegations to provide the best available scientific information and knowledge, including consultations with the EU, CLAM, and other negotiating blocs. DOSI Ambassadors distributed Policy Briefs and brochures and attended high-level events hosted by BBNJ delegations and actors to deepen our engagement with State actors (e.g. Palau Mission, Singapore Consulate, New Zealand Consulate, Explorers Club). Feedback from partners at the Global Ocean Forum highlighted the DOSI delegation as "an impressive team" and a pleasure to collaborate with. Read our [blog](#) covering reflections from the group about the PrepCom process.



View from DOSI delegation desk at PrepCom3.

Reflections from Ambassadors

Impacting policy:

"I wanted to reach out to express my heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to join the DOSI group and participate in PrepCom. It was an enriching experience. It fostered a sense of collaboration and cohesion that I believe was reflected in our work. Christine's leadership was exceptional. We made a difference in the discussions: our contributions to the CIHM debates (Christine's paper, another article of mine, and our informal meetings with state representatives, NGOs, and the IOC, during which we shared the Policy Briefs) helped shape the conversations around the CIHM prototype, which, as you know, will have an open call. It is deeply rewarding to see research having a direct impact on the negotiation process."

- Júlia Schütz Veiga, Brazil/Portugal

Building science-policy capacity for the next generation:

"As an ECOP, I attended to broaden my understanding of the multilateral ocean governance process and gain insight into the behind-the-scenes dynamics of international negotiations. It was my first experience in this type of setting, and the DOSI delegation created a supportive and welcoming environment - it was particularly helpful to have the insights of the experienced delegation members. As a result, joining the DOSI delegation provided valuable insights that will directly inform both my current research and my future career"

- Lucy Tomkins, UK

Widening participation in multilateral fora:

"Attending a multilateral negotiation space like PrepCom III for the first time as part of the DOSI delegation was both challenging and deeply enriching. Access to these spaces as an ECOP from a SIDS nation is doubly meaningful and gives access to people, spaces and conversations that further develop my career, confidence and perspective"

- Shauna Edhill, Trinidad and Tobago)



Left: DOSI delegation at PrepCom3 (left to right): Elin Thomas, Judith Gobin, Shauna Edghill, Harriet Harden Davies, Amelia Westmoreland, Christine Gaebel, Marina Garwood. Right: DOSI Ambassadors at PrepCom3 (left to right): Shauna Edghill, Judith Gobin, Christine Gaebel.

- **May 2026** - The BBNJ Working Group continued its strong engagement with the broader deep-ocean community through participation in the DOOS Annual General Meeting. Christine Gaebel, Lisa Levin, and Liz Hetherington led a dedicated breakout session on the BBNJ Agreement, highlighting recent developments and opportunities for scientific engagement. The session received excellent feedback and generated new interest in DOSI's work, resulting in several new subscribers joining the community.
- **May 2026** - BBNJ Working Group co-lead, Christine Gaebel, was invited by Climate Change Working Group co-lead Natalya Gallo to present at and participate in an online workshop hosted by OceanICU exploring the intersection between the BBNJ Agreement, deep-sea mining, and ocean carbon. Participants ranged from academics to practitioners to BBNJ delegates.
- **May 2026** - BBNJ Working Group and the Minerals Working Group commenced collaborative efforts to explore opportunities to leverage intersections between the BBNJ Agreement and the work under the International Seabed Authority (ISA), including the planning of Side Events at ISA meetings and the production of a peer-review paper.
- **Ongoing** - BBNJ Working Group co-lead, Christine Gaebel, and Working Group member, Marina Garwood, designed a survey of BBNJ stakeholder views and experiences regarding EIAs under the BBNJ Agreement. This ongoing work forms part of the BBNJ Working Group's efforts to inform the opportunities and challenges presented by the new EIA framework, including, inter alia, the assessment of cumulative impacts, overcoming knowledge gaps, and the institutional and scientific capacity required to undertake such assessments in the deep ocean.
- **Ongoing** - BBNJ Working Group co-leads, Christine Gaebel, Paul Snelgrove, and Harriet Harden-Davies, as well as Working Group members, continued to work with the DOSI Climate Change Working Group on a joint-effort manuscript which explores the BBNJ-climate nexus, opportunities presented under the former to bridge global actions that benefit sustainability goals across the nexus. The manuscript is currently under review with Marine Policy.

Summary

- A second ECOP, Natalya Gallo, joined the leadership group in September 2025, once again boosting Working Group productivity.
 - This Working Group continues to contribute scientific knowledge to the ongoing climate negotiations via partnerships and by attending key meetings such as COP30 and SB63.
 - Working Group-led workshop, Assessing Cumulative Impacts on Deep-sea Communities, with outputs providing an important foundation for improving cumulative impact assessments in the deep ocean.
 - Three peer-reviewed publications.
-
- **October 2025** - DOSI contributed to the Ocean & Climate Platform's policy recommendations, "Turning the Tide for the Blue Planet", which were endorsed by a coalition of over 87 organisations worldwide. These recommendations are structured around three strategic pillars: Understand, Deliver, and Reshape, and they aim to guide policymakers in defining governance priorities and accelerating ocean-based solutions. The recommendations are addressed to national and international decision-makers and call on them to adopt and effectively implement these proposals to achieve global climate, biodiversity, and sustainability objectives. The endorsement by the Ocean & Climate Platform network underscores the importance of integrating the ocean into climate and biodiversity policies and the urgency of taking transformative action to address the ocean's decline.
 - **November 2025** - A new DOSI [Climate Change video](#), produced by Elin Thomas, Leo Richards of Natural World Facts and the Climate Change Working Group co-leads, was released and featured in the UNFCCC COP30 Virtual Ocean Pavilion, thereby informing hundreds of conference participants.
 - **November 2025** - DOSI had a stand at the UNFCCC Virtual Ocean Pavilion for COP30, which was staffed by Working Group members. We also hosted a live-streamed event via the VOP, titled "Climate Change Mitigation and Deep-Sea Biodiversity: Risks and Opportunities", which was well-attended. Watch the recording [here](#). DOSI also hosted a second roundtable event during the conference on "Opportunities in the BBNJ Agreement for advancing climate action in the deep ocean". Watch the recording [here](#).



Screenshot of the DOSI Roundtable Discussion hosted at the COP30 Virtual Ocean Pavillion, with panellists Susanna Lidström, Lisa Levin, Marcel Jaspars, Christine Gaebel, Kristina Gjerde and Anna Metaxas.

- **November 2025** - DOSI mobilised a delegation for the UNFCCC COP30, which was held in Belem, Brazil. Narissa Bax and Juliano Palacios attended in person, with Lisa Levin attending remotely. Additional DOSI members were also present in Belem on different delegations. Once again, DOSI raised awareness of the deep ocean's role in climate regulation, its vulnerability to climate change, and the impacts of some mitigation solutions such as mCDR. It was also an important mission to highlight and discuss links between biodiversity and climate, and promote cross-fertilisation among UN instruments. DOSI Ambassadors observed and contributed to formal discussions, engaged with delegations from multiple countries, provided input for RINGO statements in plenaries and made a well-received intervention on behalf of DOSI during the Ocean Dialogue. They also spoke at sessions (e.g. Cryosphere Pavilion). DOSI Policy Briefs and Information Sheets on deep-ocean knowledge gaps, environmental impact research, and climate change were distributed to delegates, as was the app: "How much deep-sea is in your EEZ". However, it was felt that there was less focus on the ocean than in previous years. Also, it was noted that there was a concerning lack of diversity among Ocean Pavilion panellists, and DOSI feels there is an opportunity to ensure increased diversity and depth in the future.



DOSI Ambassador Narissa Bax (third from left) participating in a session during UNFCCC COP30.

- **November 2025** - Publication of an article in The Conversation titled "[The deep sea and the Arctic must be included in efforts to tackle climate change](#)". This article was written and inspired alongside COP30 and enabled deep-sea brainstorming with colleagues and other delegates, and was a good means to add focus around our work.
- **January 2026** - Publication with contributions from Moriaki Yasuhara around deep-ocean, with DOSI acknowledged: Williams *et al.* [The biosphere in the Anthropocene](#). Philos Trans R Soc Lond B Biol Sci.



- **February 2026** - The Climate Change Working Group hosted a workshop for 37 participants titled "Assessing Cumulative Impacts on Deep-sea Communities" in the week preceding the Ocean Sciences Meeting in Glasgow. The workshop brought together experts from several DOSI Working Groups, including Minerals, Offshore Energy, Pollution and Fisheries, covering expertise in various fauna, geographical locations and industries to discuss the concept and applicability of cumulative impact assessments in the deep sea, which traditionally have been developed for shallow-water ecosystems. Participants synthesised current evidence on multiple pressures affecting deep-ocean ecosystems, developed a pressure-receptor linkage framework and conducted expert-based vulnerability assessments to identify key knowledge gaps and research priorities. Discussions were intense and productive, and the outputs (in prep.) will provide an important foundation for improving cumulative impact assessments in the deep ocean.



Jesse van der Grient addresses the participants at the DOSI Cumulative Impacts Workshop, Glasgow.

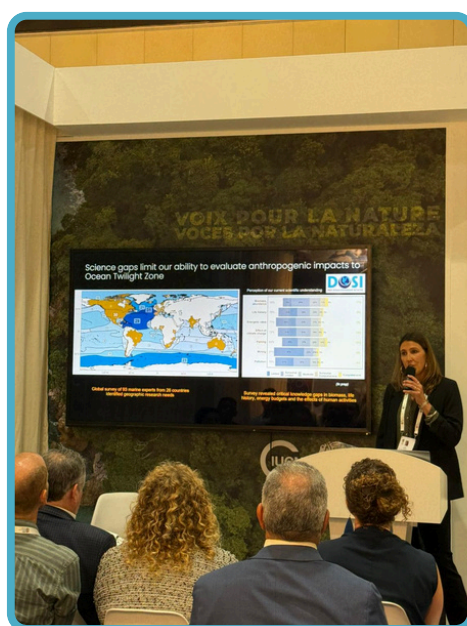
- **March 2026** - Submission of Side Event proposal to UNFCCC SB64, in collaboration with Norce and PML. Title: Strengthening ocean carbon knowledge & governance - Digital tools & deep insights for climate action. (unfortunately, not successful).
- **March 2026** - Through contact with Lisa Levin, the Climate Change Working Group was featured in the [Ocean & Climate Platform's member spotlight](#), highlighting DOSI's work and strengthening DOSI's visibility within the climate community.
- **May 2026** - Publication as a result of DOSI mCDR workshop: Lidström *et al.* [Deep differences: expanding the marine social sciences and humanities into the deep ocean](#). npj Ocean Sustainability.
- **June 2026** - DOSI Ambassadors participated in the UNFCCC SB64 in Bonn. Sonigitu Ekpe led the delegation for DOSI (University of Southampton badge), and Natalya Gallo (Working Group co-lead) joined the Norwegian delegation. Natalya delivered the official oral and written intervention on behalf of RINGO, UiB and DOSI during the second day of the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue in plenary at SB64. RINGO is an umbrella organisation representing observer NGOs, including DOSI, recognised by UNFCCC. The intervention called for alignment of activities across conventions (UNCLOS, CBD, BBNJ and human rights treaties), as well as across global assessments (IPCC, IPBES, WOA), exercising the precautionary principle, considering diverse research in decision making, and financing ocean-based solutions.



Natalya Gallo at UNFCCC SB64, Bonn.

Summary

- Following the retirement of co-lead Matt Gianni and Bernadette Butfield stepping down in May 2026 to focus on other DOSI priorities, the Working Group will be recruiting new co-leads to support its continued growth and activities.
 - Expanded the Working Group's international profile by strengthening partnerships with the Australian Government, WWF-Australia, the High Seas Alliance, the Environmental Defense Fund, and other research and policy organisations. The group's recognised expertise led to invitations to contribute to scientific meetings, policy initiatives, collaborative research, and expert advisory processes on deep-sea fisheries.
 - Two manuscripts under peer-review, two in preparation, and several additional publications in development.
-
- **September 2025** - The Lord Howe Rise Proceedings Report, A Lost Volcanic World, was published (see [here](#)). Compiled by WWF-Australia with support from Elin Thomas and Lissette Victorero, the report summarises discussions and research outcomes from the symposium held in Sydney in May. Fisheries Working Group members Ashley Rowden and Anna Metaxas contributed chapters to the report. The symposium was co-organised by the Australian Government, WWF-Australia, High Seas Alliance and DOSI. Further information about the symposium can be found in this [blog.post](#).
 - **October 2025** - Ilysa Iglesias and Lissette Victorero participated in the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi alongside other DOSI members. They participated in contact groups, providing scientific expertise during negotiations on the text of two IUCN resolutions: [8.032, Protecting seamounts and vulnerable marine ecosystems from destructive practices](#) and [8.035, Protection of mesopelagic ecosystem integrity](#). Ilysa also contributed to the Deep-Sea Booth and panel discussion sessions.
 - **November 2025** - Members Kristina Gjerde, Jeff Drazen, Helena McMonagle, Maartje Oostdijk, Amanda Schadeberg, Berthe Vastenhou, Nina Yang, Ilysa Iglesias and Lissette Victorero were among 42 experts who participated in a workshop on the mesopelagic zone, "Co-Creating a Scientific Agenda for the Mesopelagic Zone". The workshop identified key scientific priorities to inform policy, including the need for greater integration of social science, improved synthesis and coordination of mesopelagic datasets, and stronger mechanisms to connect scientific expertise with ocean management and governance bodies.



Left: Proceedings report for the A Lost Volcanic World conference. Right: DOSI Fisheries Working Group member, Ilysa Iglesias, presenting DOSI work at the IUCN World Conservation Congress.

- **January 2026** - Meetings were held with the Environmental Defence Fund and the DOSI Fisheries Working Group to discuss an Oceans5 proposal and provide input on mesopelagic fisheries. Drawing on recent policy briefs and scientific studies, contributions were made to several work packages supporting the implementation of the IUCN resolution and advancing the conservation and governance of mesopelagic ecosystems.
- **February 2026** - The latest video in the 'Introducing Deep-Ocean Stewardship' series was released to coincide with Ocean Sciences Meeting, this time with a focus on deep-sea fisheries. The video was produced by Elin Thomas in collaboration with Leo Richards and with support from the Fisheries Working Group leads. Watch it here – [Catch of the Day: The Cost of Deep-Sea Fisheries](#).
- **February 2026** - At the AGU Ocean Sciences Meeting in Glasgow, Malcolm Clark, Alex Rogers and Lissette Victorero co-chaired the session Seamounts at the Nexus of Ocean Science. The session attracted 150 to 200 participants and featured eight oral presentations and eight posters showcasing multidisciplinary research on seamount geomorphology, oceanography, biogeochemistry and deep-sea ecology. It concluded with the launch of the Seamount Science Program Initiative, inviting the international research community to collaborate on the development of a coordinated global seamount science programme.



DOSI Fisheries Working Group members chairing the Seamounts at the Nexus of Ocean Science conference sessions at the OSM 2026.

- **February 2026** - Many members of the Fisheries Working Group participated in the Climate Change Working Group workshop, Assessing Cumulative Impacts on Deep-sea Communities, contributing their expertise to the discussions and assessments of cumulative impacts from a fisheries perspective.
- **April 2026** - The DOSI Fisheries Working Group strengthened partnerships with external researchers and organisations through members' contributions to climate change publications on deep-sea fisheries, providing specialised expertise to collaborative research efforts.
- **June 2026** - Meetings were held with NRDC and Oceans North and the DOSI Fisheries Working Group to discuss a proposal on the Emperor Seamounts as a BBNJ MPA, and how the scientific outputs of the 2024 DOSI Seamount Science Summit workshop could support such efforts. Drawing on the workshop's scientific outputs, DOSI was invited to become a key collaborator in a three-year project focused on the Emperor and Cobb-Eickelberg Seamount Chains, in which DOSI will lead the development of a scientific synthesis paper assessing the Emperor Seamounts against the BBNJ Agreement criteria for area-based management tools.
- **July 2026** - Peter Auster, Amy Baco-Taylor and Savannah Goode will participate in the DOSI delegation to the UN Review Workshop on Bottom Fisheries, contributing scientific expertise to the review of the implementation of relevant UN resolutions aimed at protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).

- **Ongoing** - The Fisheries Working Group currently has two manuscripts under peer review, each addressing critical, contemporary issues at the intersection of deep-sea science and policy:
 1. *Science-Policy Gaps for Conservation and Management of the Ocean Twilight Zone*, led by Ilysa Iglesias (ECOP), currently under review at Marine Policy.
 2. *The Application of Ocean Data in Decision-Making Processes by Demersal Regional Fisheries Management Organizations: Insights from Experts*, led by Amelia Bridges (ECOP), currently under review at Fish & Fisheries.

In addition, two manuscripts are in preparation for submission:

1. *Application of the Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem (VME) Concept to Deep-Sea Policy Beyond Fisheries*, led by Ana Colaço.
2. *Deep-Sea Management Needs a Reality Check*, led by Amy Baco-Taylor.

Additionally, several scientific papers stemming from the Seamount Science Summit workshop hosted by the Fisheries Working Group remain in development due to capacity issues:

1. *Key Insights from a Seamount Community Workshop*, led by Savannah Goode and Lissette Victorero (ECOPs), synthesising the key scientific findings, research priorities and management applications identified during the workshop.
2. *Assessment of Seamounts as Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems*, led by Lissette Victorero (ECOP), developing a framework to assess individual seamounts against the FAO criteria for Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs).

Marine Genetic Resources Working Group

Summary

- The MGR Working Group works closely with the BBNJ Working Group and the Biodiversity and Conservation Task Force to ensure the latest science and knowledge around different aspects of marine genetic resources are captured, made available and discussed during high-level processes including the BBNJ Agreement.
 - Members of this Working Group have contributed to important new publications including the World Ocean Assessment 3 and DOSI Policy Briefs.
 - Members have advised the UK Government on BBNJ domestic legislation.
 - A workshop was convened in Aberdeen to discuss implementation of the BBNJ Treaty.
- **July 2025** - MGR Working Group co-leads convened a writing team for the World Ocean Assessment chapter 5A 'Use of genetic resources and technology'. The WOA3 was published on 8 June 2026.
 - **July 2025** - MGR Working Group co-leads advised the UK on BBNJ domestic legislation.
 - **July 2025** - Workshop Implementing the new UN BBNJ Treaty, Aberdeen. The workshop focused on implementing the BBNJ Agreement, covering topics such as the value of Marine Genetic Resources (MGR), the BBNJ Standardised Batch Identifier, and opportunities for marine scientists. The event aimed to foster dialogue among scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders regarding the Agreement's implementation. Outputs included preparatory material for four Policy Briefs, with two published before PrepCom II and the remainder after. DOSI delegation members observed and contributed to formal discussions, organised/ hosted sessions, and participated as speakers and panellists. Attendance: 25 in-person, over 50 online participants.



DOSI participants of Workshop Implementing the new UN BBNJ Treaty, Aberdeen: Abbe Brown, Tammy Horton, Danielle de Jonge, Christine Gaebel, Olusola Adeoye, Kerstin Kroger, Marcel Jaspars, Amelia Westmoreland, Federica Casolari, Julia Schutz-Veiga, Anthony Akpan.

- **August 2025** - Release of an important new publication from the MGR Working Group, focused on supporting implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, and Policy Brief titled "[The Monetary and Non-Monetary Value of Marine Genetic Resources and Digital Sequence Information under the BBNJ Agreement](#)". This concise document explores the economic and ethical dimensions of MGRs and digital sequence information, highlighting approaches for equitable benefit-sharing.
- **August 2025** - A new Information sheet was produced on "[How to engage with BBNJ](#)"
- **August 2025** - In collaboration with the DOSI Communications Manager and the MGR Working Group leads, a DOSI video was produced - [Treasures of the Deep: Marine Genetic Resources](#).
- **October 2025** - Working Group lead Muriel Rabone and colleagues submitted a proposal for DOSI to work as a consultancy for the ISA to support the development of standard operating procedures for sampling, processing and sharing of biological collections and genetic data from the Area. We are currently awaiting the outcome.
- **December 2025** - Abbe Brown led a new Policy Brief on BBNJ & MGR which was shared at the CBD-hosted Expert Workshop on Scientific and Technical Work Conducted under the Convention on Biological Diversity Relevant to Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction in Bergen: [Towards coherence and avoiding undermining: Policy Recommendations on Implementation of the Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement regarding Marine Genetic Resources](#). Marcel Jaspars acted as Rapporteur for the MGR discussions, and his input was included in the [final report](#).

Task Force for the Conservation of Deep-Ocean Biodiversity

Summary

- The DOSI Biodiversity Task Force spans across all DOSI Working Groups with a focus on ensuring the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) process and the IPBES are informed on important issues relating to the deep ocean - recognising the differences that occur in this realm as opposed to other areas on the planet. Continued engagement with these bodies is serving to strengthen ties and ensure DOSI is known as the go-to hub for deep ocean issues.
- Following a successful funding bid, a new project is underway (Ocean45) which aims to develop a 'Reading and Interpretation Guide' to support the clear, consistent, and scientifically rigorous operationalisation of the 22 indicative criteria for identification of areas in need of protection. This will help with the implementation phase of the BBNJ Treaty and is being conducted in collaboration with the DOSI BBNJ Working Group.
- **July 2025** - Task Force co-lead Anna Metaxas was invited as Coordinating Lead Author for the IPBES methodological assessment of integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity (spatial planning and connectivity assessment). She is coordinating Chapter 3, on "Implementing targets 2 and 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, on restoration and protected areas and other area-based conservation measures". This work is ongoing and has involved essential travel to writing meetings.
- **October 2025** - DOSI met with IUCN's Ocean Team and the Red List of Ecosystems team to discuss next steps for deep-sea RLE assessments, and team members have been informing this process. Strong alignment and future collaboration is anticipated and has been further discussed this month.
- **September 2025** - Proposal submitted by IUCN high seas group, DOSI and other partners to Bloomberg and Oceans5 for funding to aid in the implementation of BBNJ with respect to scientific clarifications. This proposal was successful, and a new Ocean45 project is now underway (see below).
- **October 2025** - DOSI was represented at CBD SBSTTA27 in Panama by Anna Metaxas and Eugenia Thomas, representing the Task Force's ongoing engagement with international biodiversity policy. Eugenia shared very positive reflections, highlighting the value of participating as a DOSI Ambassador and the opportunity to build regional and international connections.



DOSI Ambassadors Eugenia Thomas and Anna Metaxas attending UN CBD SBSTTA27.

"Attending SBSTTA-27 made me aware of the importance and the significance of these meetings as they provide the foundation into how resources will be protected and managed. I am extremely grateful for the assistance and the warm guidance that Anna Metaxas provided me throughout my time at the SBSTTA. I am extremely and deeply grateful to the Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative for providing me with the opportunity to attend, acquire knowledge and to participate at events at the SBSTTA. The lessons and connections that I gained will be carried throughout my career towards my dream of becoming a university professor and deep-sea consultant."

- Eugenia Thomas, Trinidad & Tobago.

- **December 2025** - Ana Colaço attended a CBD meeting in Bergen, with Marcel Jaspars also in attendance. This was a meeting to discuss EBSAs, and scientific participation was relatively limited, underlining the importance of continued engagement of DOSI representing the research community.
- **April 2026** - Commencement of collaborative Ocean45 project following successful proposals to Oceans5. The aim is to develop a 'Reading and Interpretation Guide' to support the clear, consistent, and scientifically rigorous operationalisation of the 22 indicative criteria for identification of areas in need of protection (e.g., uniqueness, rarity, vulnerability, fragility), as set out in Annex I of the BBNJ Agreement. These criteria underpin the identification and designation of Area-Based Management Tools (ABMTs) in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) and are essential for ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity. To support States, additional guidance is required regarding the definition, interpretation, and methodological application. An Advisory Board has been set up, and a DOSI-wide call for an ECOP to help lead the project resulted in more than 150 applications. The selection has now been made and DOSI member and ECOP Kirsty McQuaid from Nelson Mandela University, South Africa, will start work on 1st July 2026. The next stage is the first of 2 workshops in July 2026. This work is being undertaken in collaboration with members of the BBNJ Working Group.
- **June 2026** - Nomination by DOSI of Haneih Saeedi following call for experts to participate in a workshop to support the development of a proposal for future work of IPBES. Task Force co-lead Anna Metaxas has been nominated by Canada.

Offshore Energy Working Group

Summary

- The major focus for the Offshore Energy Working Group in the past 12 months has been the planning and execution of a regional workshop in Colombia to improve environmental knowledge in the deep ocean alongside offshore energy development with a goal of improving best practice recommendations and impact assessment.
- **October 2025** - Emilia Bravo, Daniel Jones and Paula Zapata Ramirez co-organised a workshop at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB), Medellín, Colombia: "Process for Improving Knowledge of the Deep Sea Offshore Energy in Colombia: A Framework for Science, Industry, and Policy." This DOSI-sponsored workshop brought together experts from academia, industry and government.

Colombia stands at a critical juncture where marine science, policy, and industry must converge to responsibly manage large ocean territories. The workshop highlighted that while capacity and intent exist, progress depends on integrating fragmented data, strengthening governance, building expertise, and institutionalising collaboration. With these foundations, Colombia can become a regional leader in sustainable offshore development and deep-sea stewardship.

The discussions and outcomes have been captured in a peer-reviewed publication outlining a science-based framework for data-poor regions, using Colombia as a case study, helping ensure that the nation's clean energy transition goes hand-in-hand with deep-sea stewardship.



Participants of the DOSI workshop “Process for Improving Knowledge of the Deep Sea Offshore Energy in Colombia: A Framework for Science, Industry, and Policy” in Medellín, Colombia.

- **May 2026** - Submission of paper from the Colombia workshop to the Marine Policy journal: *Science-based governance for offshore renewable energy: Institutional readiness and policy priorities in Colombia*. Awaiting outcome.

Decade of Deep Ocean Science Working Group - Challenger 150

Summary

- The big news for this group is that following the Mapping workshop in Nice, as reported last year, the deep-sea community has been awarded grants of \$6.2 million across 3 related projects.
 - A halfway-through-the-Decade Highlights Report produced in February 2026 illustrates the significantly expanded global engagement in deep-sea research through the dedicated work of the DOSI Challenger 150 UN Ocean Decade Programme.
 - The leads of this group have developed and submitted a funding proposal for a new programme called DEEP LEGACY via a EU Horizon Call. Results should be forthcoming in the next few weeks.
 - A webinar on an exciting new funded Challenger 150 mapping project was held in June.
- **September 2025** - Following a successful proposal in July 2025, Challenger 150's African Network of Deep-sea Researchers organised a deep-ocean mini symposium at the WIOMSA workshop in Mombasa, Kenya, titled "Into the Depths: Advancements in Deep-Water Research in the Western Indian Ocean". Convenors were Kirsty McQuaid from Nelson Mandela University, South Africa and Agnes Muthumbi from the University of Nairobi, Kenya. This mini symposium, aligned with the theme Science as the Foundation for Decision-making, aiming to: raise awareness and inspire enthusiasm for deep-water research in the WIO; highlight recent research activities and discoveries; facilitate new connections among researchers and strengthen collaborative networks; and identify strategic priorities for future deep-water research by showcasing new insights and fostering a dynamic research community. The symposium strives to collectively advance our understanding of the WIO's deep-water ecosystems in support of science-based decision-making.



Angela Nyangwe and Kirsty McQuaid (presenting) at WIOMSA, 2025.

- **February 2026** - The Challenger 150 "[Halfway Highlights](#)" report was finalised, marking an important milestone in documenting progress and impact.
- **February 2026** - Challenger 150's African Network of Deep-Water Researchers co-lead, Kirsty McQuaid, participated in the DOSI Town Hall 'Deep-Ocean Science as the Foundation for a Thriving Global Ocean' on a Panel along with other members of the UN Deep Ocean Decade community who were invited to collaborate.



DOSI Town Hall at the Ocean Sciences Meeting, Glasgow.

- **April 2026** - Following the Challenger 150 Mapping the Atlantic workshop in June last year (see last years' report), 3 successful funding proposals have been awarded significant grants for the community to take the work forward in 3 separate but related projects: Coral Cartography (\$1.5 million funded by CORDAP), Deep Vision (\$2 million funded by Bezos Earth Fund) and Deep Map (\$2.7 million funded by Oceanshot from the The Sasakawa Peace Foundation). The Oceanshot award includes support for a DOSI stakeholder workshop in 2027/8.
- **April 2026** - A proposal for EU Horizon funding to support the UN Decade Programme called DEEP LEGACY, was submitted. This represents a major collaborative effort across the Decade Working Group and partners and was led by DOSI Decade Working Group / Challenger 150 co-leads Ana Hilario and Kerry Howell.

- **June 2026** - The African Network of Deep-Water Researchers, a highly effective network of the Challenger 150 programme, have hosted numerous educational and connecting webinars and an excellent regular newsletter with many opportunities for new collaborations. They are currently exploring new funding options to maintain the core team beyond next month.
- **June 2026** - The Working Group presented a webinar on The Atlantic's Deep Secrets on the Map. Across the deep Atlantic Basin, there are significant gaps in spatial biodiversity data. These data underpin decisions on fisheries management and the protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs), regional environmental management planning, and the effective use of area-based management tools. Under the umbrella of DOSI's UN Ocean Decade Programme, Challenger 150, three new projects, Coral Cartography, Deep Vision, and Deep Map, are working to address the gaps by producing new modelled maps of deep-water ecosystems across the Atlantic, based on coordinated Atlantic-scale seafloor observations, with a particular focus on cold-water corals and other VMEs. This 1-hour interactive webinar introduced the projects and discussed how they can support the work of the webinar attendees.

The Atlantic's Deep Secrets on the Map

Across the deep Atlantic Basin, there are significant gaps in spatial biodiversity data. These data underpin decisions on fisheries management and the protection of VMEs, regional environmental management planning, and the effective use of area-based management tools.

📅 23 June

🕒 14:00–15:00 (UK time)

💻 Online (Microsoft Teams)

🗣️ Presentations will be available in English, French and Spanish







Art, Science and Policy Task Force

Summary

- The **Art, Science and Policy Task Force** is a new focus area for DOSI which emerged during discussions at DOSI Day, January 2025 and was launched in May 2025. It is led by Tanya Young, Jozée Sarrazin and Pradeep Singh. The aim of this Task Force is to foster greater collaboration with a diverse array of artists with an aim to encourage the use of arts as an effective way to communicate deep-sea science and knowledge to policymakers and other stakeholders, with a view to generate interest and support informed decision-making. Arts are increasingly used as one of several tools to enhance ambition in the context of ocean governance, and is particularly useful for bringing the less-known deep sea to the attention of stakeholders and policy-makers. The Task Force aims to stimulate creative thinking among DOSI network members, and perhaps even bring out the talented artists from within them. Ultimately, raising awareness and communicating about the challenges that the deep sea is facing through expressions and emotions, and to touch those who are not spontaneously inclined toward science, is our goal.

- **July 2025** - The Art, Science and Policy Task Force organised two Side Events at the ISA30 in July in Kingston, Jamaica. First, in partnership with Ifremer and Teatr PIBA, the Task Force supported SPLUJ, a sensory theatrical experience that brings audiences on board a deep-sea expedition. Through spatialised sound, narration, and live performance, participants experienced the emotions, science, and human stories of life at sea. SPLUJ combines artistry and research to spark dialogue between scientists, artists, and the public about the mysteries and importance of the deep ocean. Feedback was very positive, with several participants remarking they truly felt they had “dived into the deep sea.” A screening of the movie “How Deep Is Your Love” was also organised. Both events attracted a great number of delegates.
- **June 2026** - The Art, Science and Policy Task Force convened two online meetings (in March and June) with its members to discuss, exchange ideas and plan future activities. Some action points were validated, including the organisation of an art exhibition to mark the 50th anniversary of the discovery of hydrothermal vents (see below), the presentation of artists involved in the Task Force and their inspirations in each DOSI Newsletter and the future organisation of an online showcase during the UN International Day of the Deep Seabed (1 November 2026). The need to raise funding for the Task Force and particularly for the exhibition in the Azores and a potential “world tour” remains a priority.
- **April - July 2026** - An exhibition will be the centrepiece of the Task Force’s activities in 2027. It will take place from 14 to 18 June 2027 during the 8th International Symposium on Chemosynthesis-Based Ecosystems in Horta, Azores. An open call for expressions of interest was launched in April 2026, inviting artists from a broad range of disciplines to contribute to this unique initiative. To encourage wider participation, the submission deadline was extended from 21 June to 21 July 2026. A selection committee comprising three DOSI members, two representatives of the Azores local organising committee, and one member of the Deep-Sea Society will review the applications at the beginning of August and select five artistic projects for the exhibition.



SPLUJ, a sensory theatrical experience is presented as a DOSI Side event during the ISA30 in Kingston, Jamaica.

Summary

- This Working Group has experienced a natural lull in activity over the past 12 months as the leads re-group to decide on next steps for this focus area. Nevertheless, the Working Group has continued engagement with several fora, including the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES).
- Co-lead Eva Ramirez-Llodra has stepped down from leadership owing to other pressing commitments and the group are actively seeking a new co-lead to help move the group forward in the coming months.
- **October 2025** - The Working Group participated in the workshop on “Process for Improving Knowledge of the Deep Sea Offshore Energy in Colombia: A Framework for Science, Industry, and Policy”, organised by the Offshore Energy Working Group. There, a perspective on the contaminants that can be released from the installation of offshore energy structures was highlighted.
- **January 2026** - Publication of report from UNOC3 Conference Side Event on “[The UN Treaty to End Plastic Pollution: Robust Science for Success](#)”, co-organised by DOSI.
- **February 2026** - The Working Group contributed knowledge on the potential for contaminant release and ecotoxicology from mining activities, marine carbon dioxide removal approaches or offshore energy installations, to the workshop held in Glasgow on “Assessing Cumulative Impacts on Deep-sea Communities”, organised by the Climate Change Working Group.
- **March 2026** - The Working Group was involved in the organisation, and several Working Group members participated in the online ICES Workshop on Deep Sea Mining Chemical Impacts, Thresholds, Monitoring, and Uncertainty (WKDSM), held on 17-18 March. Nélia Mestre delivered the talk on: Chemical exposure pathways, ecosystem responses and critical uncertainties relevant to environmental risk assessment. This will result in an ICES report that is currently being produced.



DOSI members participating in the ICES annual meeting (top) and International Seafloor Macrolitter workshop (bottom).

- **April 2026** - Nélia Mestre participated in the annual meeting of the ICES Marine Chemistry Working Group, hosted at the Instituto Hidrográfico in Lisbon, from 20-24 April. Many topics were discussed, and work will continue during the year to produce policy-relevant documents related to chemical substances of emerging concern (including their presence in the deep sea), microplastics and ocean acidification, as well as human impacts derived from renewable energy and deep-sea mining. Important documents are regularly produced by the group and used by policymakers for improved management towards a healthier and more resilient marine environment. Many members of the ICES Marine Chemistry Working Group are now members of the DOSI Pollution and Debris Working Group as a result.
- **April 2026** - Lucy Woodall, Melanie Bergmann and Chris Pham attended the International Seafloor Macrolitter workshop 2026 in Athens, Greece. This is an invited group of global experts that discussed issues on pollution of the ocean by seafloor macro-litter, including monitoring, data management and mitigation measures.
- **June 2026** - A new joint Policy Brief and an Information Sheet on deep-sea mining ecotoxicology are in production in collaboration with the Minerals Working Group, and are expected to be published in time for the ISA meeting in July. The Working Group has also been exploring potentially polluting wrecks as a topic for another Policy Brief.

New Temporary Focus Group on Deep-Sea Ecosystem Services

Summary

- A new temporary Focus Group on Deep-sea Ecosystem Services (DSES) was formed in January to better understand DSES, led by Adelaide Ferreira and Márcia Marques from the Portuguese Institute for Sea and Atmosphere, and assisted by Ana Colaço from the University of the Azores. A sign-up form to the new Focus Group attracted 189 members within days of its circulation.

The aim and scope of the Focus Group is to identify, categorise, synthesise and build knowledge on DSES, thereby complementing the work of other DOSI Working Groups. This may include: identification of the most relevant ecosystem services provided by the deep sea, mapping where DSES data exist, brainstorming and developing valuation methodologies for DSES, and supporting capacity building and decision-making, including the creation of economic incentives to conserve deep-sea environments.

- **April 2026** - The inaugural meeting of the new Deep-Sea Ecosystem Services Focus Group saw an excellent turnout of around 50 participants. Led by Márcia Marques, Ana Colaço and Adelaide Ferreira, the meeting demonstrated strong interest and momentum for this new cross-cutting initiative. The discussion centred on why the deep sea is missing from current accounting frameworks, what outputs the group should produce, and how to handle methodological and practical challenges before a proposed workshop later in 2026. The initial focus is on the quantification and valuation of deep-sea carbon, as the exact processes involved in carbon sequestration and storage and their magnitude are not well understood nor quantified, nor are there established valuation methods for this service, particularly in the deep sea.
- **May 2026** - A follow-up survey of who would be interested in participating in the production of three proposed publications has attracted much interest, with the planning of next steps now underway.