

DOSI Participation Report for UNFCCC COP28

November – December 2023

Overview

DOSI members participated in the 28th UNFCCC Climate Change Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. DOSI's key goals were to:

1. Highlight the important connections between deep-ocean biodiversity and climate change to both delegates and other observers.
2. Share information on the potential deep-ocean environmental impacts of marine carbon dioxide removal (mCDR) with delegates, government figures, and observers.
3. Meet with expert observers and interest groups to understand their views on the topic of mCDR and its impact on deep-ocean environments.
4. Build connections with observers, delegations, and journalists who can help advance DOSI's mission.

We successfully achieved these goals. A key finding at this event was that many actors are pushing for rapid expansion of mCDR research and implementation as a measure to combat climate change. This push will likely be scientifically and politically controversial, and the Climate Change Working Group Leads believe more discussion of environmental risk is needed. The Leads will be focusing many of the Working Group's future activities on this subject.

Participants:

A wide range of DOSI team members on various delegations, as DOSI has no official status with UNFCCC. Core DOSI activities were managed by:

Lisa Levin, DOSI Climate Change Co-Lead (Weeks 1 and 2)

Sarah Seabrook, DOSI Climate Change Co-Lead (Weeks 1 and 2)

Brandon Gertz, DOSI Director of Communications (Week 2)

Was this event worthwhile?

DOSI members have noted unique challenges posed by past UNFCCC COPs that differentiate these meetings from other policy events. UNFCCC COPs are very large and busy, which limits our ability to provide expert advice directly to delegates. Negotiating positions are determined by many countries before the event begins. The location of this COP in Dubai was also a concern, as controversy related to UAE's role as an oil-producing state affected the event. These factors led to careful consideration of whether DOSI attendance and participation were worthwhile.

Ultimately, we found participating in COP28 to be beneficial. Knowing the conditions we would be facing, our team adjusted our strategy to focus on key opportunities to share messages with authorities, meet with journalists, and consult with other observers. DOSI should continue to carefully assess the value of UNFCCC COP attendance each year.

Follow-Up Recommendations

1. The Climate Change Working Group will be coordinating a review of peer-reviewed literature on environmental consequences of mCDR, as well as integrative assessments and policy statements.
2. DOSI may wish to coordinate with other organizations on a potential declaration regarding protecting marine biodiversity from consequences of at-scale mCDR in 2024.
3. The Climate Change WG leads recommend highlighting mCDR concerns and needs in future WG and DOSI activities.
4. The Climate Change WG leads recommend a DOSI event on the topic of mCDR at the UN Ocean Conference in 2025.
5. Brandon is coordinating with journalists met at the event to help those reporting on deep-ocean-relevant themes like ocean plastic or deep-sea mining connect with DOSI experts.

DOSI Actions at COP28

Materials Shared During the Event:

[Incorporating Deep-Ocean Biodiversity into Climate Change Policy](#) (DOSI Policy Brief)

[Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal: Ocean Impacts and Policy Needs](#) (DOSI Policy Brief)

[Identifying Deep Ocean Science Gaps for Understanding and Monitoring Climate Change](#) (DOSI Information Sheet)

Levin *et al.* (2023) Deep-Sea Impacts of Climate Interventions ([free access from the Climate Change WG webpage.](#))

DOSI members attended and participated in many events. Events where Lisa, Sarah, or Brandon were featured as speakers are listed below.

Dec. 1 14:30-15:30 PM IUCN Pavilion, "Is finance the point of convergence of the scientific and socio-economic aspects of marine nature-based solutions?" (Lisa Levin)

Dec. 1 17:30- 18:30 Peru Pavilion. "Una nueva y audaz vision para la agenda marina del Peru." (Lisa Levin)

Dec. 2 at 9:30 AM Ocean Pavilion. "Biodiversity Deoxygenation and Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities." (Lisa Levin and Sarah Seabrook) <https://youtube.com/live/x6025FYPoVo?feature=share>

Dec. 3. 10-11 AM Ocean Pavilion. "Decade Knowledge for Climate Action"
(Lisa Levin representing DOOS.)

Dec. 3 Earth Information Day World Café. Lisa Levin led the table on Ocean Acidification and Ocean Deoxygenation. 15:00-17:00 in Meeting Room 36.

Dec. 4 12:30 PM Saudi Green Innovation Forum Green zone. "Addressing a Triple Crisis: The UN High Seas Treaty to the Rescue of Marine Biodiversity." 12:30 (Lisa Levin)

Dec. 5 Pacific Pavilion 9 AM (50 min). "Ensuring ecosystem integrity to sustain deep ocean benefits and values." (panelists) (Lisa Levin and Sarah Seabrook) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88093704759?pw>

Dec. 8 15:00-16:30 Ocean Decade Pavilion. Decade Dialogue, Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal: An Ocean-Based Climate Solution or Not? (Brandon Gertz, Sarah Seabrook, Lisa Levin) A DOSI-coordinated marine CDR discussion between experts (10 participants).

Dec. 9 RINGO meeting with NOAA Director Richard Spinrad. 3:45 PM Room TBD (Lisa Levin, Sarah Seabrook, Brandon Gertz)

Dec. 10 Decade Spotlight (Brandon Gertz). Highlighting Deep Ocean Decade Programmes.

Dec. 10 Peru Pavilion 1-2 PM PM Topic: Protecting the seabed. Lisa Levin as panelist.

Dec. 11 13.15-14:45 SE1 Room 3 (123 pax), in the Blue Zone, for the side event "How can International Ocean Law assist States to meet their Climate Change Obligations?" Lisa Levin as speaker and panelist.

Dec. 11. Press conference response to Norway's decision to move forward with Deep Seabed Mining in its EEZ. Lisa Levin as 1 of 4 participants (not representing DOSI).

Dec. 11 Contribution to RINGO's COP28 closing statement. Adding language stating that mCDR and other unproven technologies should not be treated as a replacement for emissions reductions. Also highlighting the importance of ocean research. (Brandon Gertz)

Dec. 12 Press interview with UAE newspaper reporter on COP 28 outcomes. (Lisa Levin)

Lisa Levin and Sarah Seabrook attended a variety of marine Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR) sessions, observing extensive promotion of mCDR by various groups. What was heard raised serious concerns about the lack of discussion of environmental risk. This led to multiple conversations with other stakeholders about mCDR and the need to elevate discussion of deep-sea environmental consequences.



From left to right: Brandon Gertz, Lisa Levin, Sarah Seabrook, and Wassim Dbouk.



Lisa Levin speaks on the deep ocean at an event on international ocean law.



Brandon Gertz speaks on the ties between deep-ocean science and climate policy.



Participants in DOSI's Ocean Decade Pavilion Dialogue pose after discussing their perspectives on the environmental risks of mCDR.



Sarah Seabrook and Lisa Levin prepare to sit on a panel about deep-ocean ecosystems.