



Inspire

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Ocean**

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FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION: OPERA

Advancing SDG 14 (ocean science)
through EU-Africa partnership

10 June 2025



The EU, Sustainable Development and the Ocean: why are we here?

EU INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

Commitment for multilateralism and the rules-based order. EU's global ocean leadership. UN's key role, 2030 Agenda, Treaties and international negotiations (BBNJ, Global Plastics Treaty, Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity), UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

EU POLICY FRAMEWORKS DRIVING OCEAN ACTION

European Green Deal, Global Gateway Strategy, EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, European Ocean Pact, etc. + specifically in Africa: Africa-EU partnership, AU-EU Innovation Agenda, etc.

EU FINANCING INSTRUMENTS

Global Europe: Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)

Global action in figures (2021-2027):

- **€79.5 billion for NDICI** (sustainable development, environment, climate)
- **€300 billion for Global Gateway** (with a dedicated Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package)
- **€1 billion** in ocean voluntary contributions pledged at UNOC3



The EU, Africa, a shared ocean: why ocean science and knowledge?

EU-AFRICA PARTNERSHIP ON OCEAN

Sustainable blue economies and ocean governance = a growing priority. Africa: 38 coastal countries. Ocean: climate, jobs, food, energy, security, identity. Momentum at regional level to protect and sustainably use ocean resources (STI AU-EU High-level Policy Dialogue, AU-EU Innovation Agenda, Agenda 2063, STISA 2034, Africa blue economy strategies).

OCEAN SCIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

No life without ocean and marine life. No sustainable development without a healthy ocean. Data, science, cutting-edge technologies fundamental for informed decision-making, trust-building and cooperation, innovation. Digital ocean systems and information services are essential to support global ocean governance.

EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS (real impact)

Stronger partnerships, knowledge and capacity-sharing. Emerging thriving pan-African and international ocean community (trust, co-creation, locally driven innovation).

Global action in figures (2021-2027):

- **€177 million for regional ocean programmes in Africa** (new UNOC3 - ocean voluntary contributions)
- **€305 million for bilateral ocean programmes in Africa** (new UNOC3 - ocean voluntary contributions)



The EU, Mercator Ocean International, African institutions, the UN: why OPERA?

AFRICA REGIONAL CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE (ARCX) PROGRAMME

Advance science, technology and innovation STI to promote sustainable development in Africa. Increase STI capacities of African Regional Centres of Excellence. Five thematic areas related to green transition: ocean => **Ocean Prediction Enhancement in Regions of Africa**. Historical background (GMES&Africa - build on what has been done and on existing forces/mechanisms).

FRAMEWORK: UN DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Science-informed policies, knowledge ocean-related gaps. Africa Region and Roadmap (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO IOC-Africa, regional collaboration). Mandate of Mercator Ocean International MOI (OceanPrediction Decade Collaborative Centre, Copernicus Marine Service, Digital Twin).

ONE INTERNATIONAL OCEAN PREDICTION COMMUNITY

EU + MOI + African organisations + UN. Calls for proposals (transparency). Links, connections, collaborative work between Africa's scientific and technological innovation networks and Europeans. Capacity transfer, expertise, technologies. Work together, deliver as one.

Global action in figures (2021-2027):

- **€80 million for ARCX regional programme in Africa**
- **Including €7 million for OPERA** (several calls for proposals) – *budget might be increased*



To conclude...

Ocean leadership through action: OPERA the case for multilateralism, partnerships and science

We are no longer in a phase of awareness. We are in the era of action. OPERA is how we act – together.

Now. **LIMITED RESOURCES STILL STANDING IN THE WAY**

SDG14 most underfunded of all SDGs. Ocean-related ODA = only 1% of total global ODA. Significant gap between ambition and resources. Urgent need to scale-up financing (Global Gateway Strategy, blended finance, innovative financing mechanisms, greater mobilisation of the private sector, a critical partner in ocean sustainability).

MULTILATERALISM, EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS, SCIENCE AND OPERA

Ocean is a shared global resource. Sustainability cannot be ensured by any country alone. Science is needed to inform decision-making, create scientific knowledge and ocean-based tools. Multilateral cooperation, co-designed and inclusive projects such as OPERA, remain the most effective path to delivering on SDG14 and securing a healthy ocean for all.



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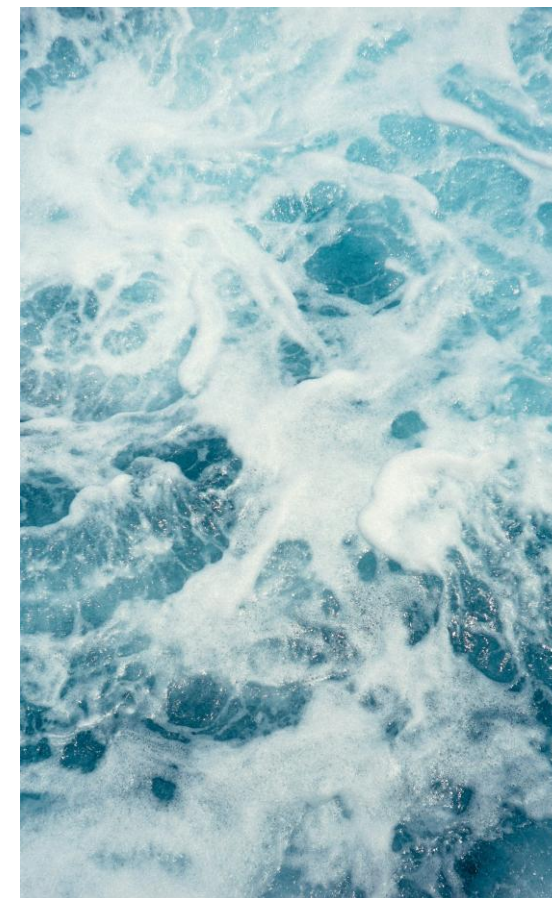


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- ✓ « The ocean is part of who we are. And it must be our shared responsibility. Because today, the ocean is in danger». Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission (One Ocean Summit, Brest, 11 February 2022)
- ✓ « The futures of Europe and Africa are tightly interlinked – together, we face many challenges, but the potential for our cooperation is even greater ». Jozef Síkela, European Commissioner for International Partnerships (third EU and the African Union (AU) Ministerial Meeting, Brussels, 21 May 2025)
- ✓ « Ending the ocean emergency is a race we must win. And by working as one, it's a race we can win. Let's all become the champions the ocean needs ». António Guterres, UN Secretary-General (Ocean Race Summit, Cabo Verde, 23 January 2023)
- ✓ « The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever ». Jean-Jacques Cousteau, French oceanographer (amongst others) 1910-1997





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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

[About ArcX | Africa Knowledge Platform](#)

[Ocean Prediction DCC website](#)

