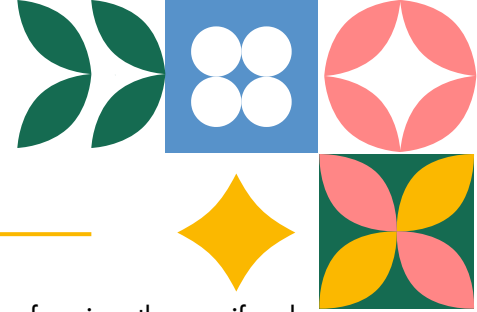




Youth Statement for United Nations Ocean Conference 2025



At a time when over 733 million people face hunger, the urgency of transforming the agrifood systems is undeniable. Aquatic food systems, though currently facing challenges around sustainability and climate resilience, hold immense potential to contribute to this transformation. They are integral to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water).

However, the transformation of aquatic food systems will remain incomplete unless youth - the present and the future of our agrifood systems - are placed at the center of this agenda.

In the youth consultation on ocean sustainability, which engaged more than 300 participants, youth shared their lived experiences, proposed innovative solutions, and offered clear recommendations for the future of fisheries and aquaculture.

A consistent message emerged: youth are already acting as agents of change. Their meaningful inclusion is not only necessary -it is vital for driving a blue transformation.

As shared here today, three key priority areas were identified to strengthen youth engagement in the sector:

1. Structured and sustained capacity development tools to equip youth with the skills needed for effective participation;
2. Access to context-specific, locally relevant data and science to inform and guide their actions; and
3. Integrated support systems to enable sustainable resource management and scale up youth-led innovations.

In response to these needs, the Youth Constituency in Fisheries and Aquaculture is being established. This platform seeks to institutionalize youth engagement across sectoral dialogues and decision-making processes. It aims to facilitate intergenerational exchange, promote evidence-based youth action and ensure that young people have a voice in relevant policy discussions.

We encourage all interested youth to express their interest and share feedback on the constituency's focus by filling out the expression of interest form [here](#).

This will help us further structure the constituency in alignment with the priorities expressed by all of you today and we will reach out to you once we launch applications.

At the same time, we call upon Member States, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and research institutions to support youth even further.

Let us work together to ensure that youth are empowered to lead, to co-develop solutions and to participate meaningfully in shaping the future of aquatic food systems. Let us recognize youth leadership as a cornerstone of global agrifood systems transformation.

Join us in building a future where youth are not only heard but actively shaping policy, driving innovation, and leading sustainable change in fisheries and aquaculture.