



PROGRAMME

TOWARDS THE UN OCEAN CONFERENCE 2025

science, policy & blue economy, a common ambition for the UAE, France, and Costa Rica



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Thursday 30 May 2024

From 2:00 pm

Zayed Theatre - Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi Campus

Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi Ocean Institute is organizing its first international Ocean Conference **Towards the UN Ocean Conference 2025: science, policy & blue economy, a common ambition for the UAE, France, and Costa Rica.**

The conference held at Sorbonne Abu Dhabi will give the floor to major international public & private actors, Scientifics and industry leaders to debate and raise awareness about Ocean Research, Ecosystems & Preservation, Coastal Cities & Blue Economy.

On this occasion, leaders & experts from the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC), the UAE Ministry of Climate Change & Environment, the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, the World Research Institute, Abu Dhabi Maritime Academy and CMA CGM, amongst others, will share their views on the crucial topic of Ocean, raising awareness on the UN SDG 14 Life Below Water to Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

This conference, held in the frame of the 2025 UN Ocean Conference, co-organized by France and Costa-Rica, will present the key projects of the newly launched Sorbonne Abu Dhabi Ocean Institute.

This event is part of the sustainability initiative of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi and inline with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 14.



PROGRAMME

VISIT OF JAYWUN

(10:30, by invitation only at Zayed Port)

In partnership with the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, a visit of the research vessel Jaywun will be organised.

OPENING REMARKS

(14:00-14:15)

HE Nicolas Niemtchinow, Ambassador of France to the UAE
HE Francisco J. Chacón Hernández, Ambassador of Costa Rica to the UAE
Prof Nathalie Martial-Braz, Vice Chancellor of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi

Panel 1
(14:15-15:15)

This panel is moderated by Ashok Adicéam, Head of International Mobilization & Deputy Special Envoy UNOC 3

International & regional leading entities emphasize the actions to support and nurture SDG 14 Life Below Water. Under the theme “Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean”, they will discuss the role of blue economy, coastal cities, and civil society.

UNOC Overview:

By Ashok Adicéam, Head of International Mobilization & Deputy Special Envoy UNOC 3

Blue Economy:

By Stephanie Ockenden, Deputy Head of Secretariat for the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy at the WRI (World Resources Institute)

Civil Society & UNOC:

By Marina Antonopoulou, Senior Director – Conservation, Climate & Energy, Emirates Nature - WWF

KEYNOTES

(15:15-15:45)

Hiba Obaid Mohammad Darwish Alshehhi, Director of Biodiversity Department, UAE Ministry of Climate Change & Environment

HE Ahmed Abdulmuttaleb Baharoon, Executive Director for Environmental Information and Science and Outreach Management, Environment Agency Abu Dhabi

Coffee break (15min)

Panel 2
(16:00-17:00)

This panel is moderated by Admiral Christophe Prazuck, Director of the Ocean Institute and former chief of the French Navy.

International Scientific experts & researchers of the Ocean Institute present their scientific projects to advance ocean science, with a focus on the UAE.

Mangroves contribution to biodiversity conservation and climate action

By Prof Tarik Meziane, Director of BOREA Research Lab, National Museum of Natural History, France

eDNA-based monitoring of marine fish and mammals

By Prof Jean-Luc Jung, Director of Dinard Marine Station, National Museum of Natural History, France

Marine mammal observatory and monitoring their marine environment

By Prof Oliver Adam, Bio acoustician, Full Professor at Sorbonne University

Observing the Ocean in the context of climate change and societal demand - developing a glider-based observation system off Abu Dhabi

By Hervé Claustre, CNRS Research Director, Sorbonne University & CNRS, Sea Institute of Villefranche-sur-Mer

Reflections on a Marine Plastic Pollution Treaty

By Dr Beatriz Garcia, Associate Professor of Law, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi

Panel 3
(17:00-18:00)

Key maritime & ocean related industry actors express their views on Ocean preservation.

| Dr Yasser Al Wahedi, President, Abu Dhabi Maritime Academy

| Jean-Baptiste Longin, General Manager UAE, Oman & Qatar, CMA CGM

| Prof Philippe Lebaron, Professor, Senior Advisor for economic partnerships,
Sorbonne University Presidency office

CONCLUSION REMARKS

(18:00-18:15)

| By Admiral Christophe Prazuck, Director of the Ocean Institute and former
chief of the French Navy.

EXHIBITION TOUR

(18:30-19:00)

"Living Colors for Pure Ocean" Exhibition Guided Tour by photographer
Christophe Chellapermal



PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



LIVING COLORS FOR PURE OCEAN

Underwater photography by Christophe Chellapermal

"Living Colors for Pure Ocean" celebrates the mesmerizing beauty of the ocean through the lens of its colorful biodiversity. This exhibition highlights the extraordinary, often invisible, marine microfauna that plays a crucial role in the balance of ocean ecosystems.

By revealing marine life in all its chromatic glory, we hope to raise awareness and take action to preserve the ocean.

By becoming a patron of the exhibition, you invest in the future of ocean research. If you're interested in contributing to the development of the Ocean Institute of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, please contact vcoffice@sorbonne.ae



Christophe Chellapermal

ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Christophe Chellapermal is a UAE-based artist, photographer, and explorer, involved in diving and marine activities for over 25 years. He founded "Nomad Ocean Adventures" dive centers in the UAE from 2004 to 2017.

His photographs, often highlighting conservation efforts and has been featured in major publications like The Times of London. His work aims to spotlight aquatic environment preservation and the impacts of new pollution sources, earning him a 2020 Ocean Art Award in Marine Conservation.

© Christophe Chellapermal

VISIT OF JAYWUN

JAYWUN
جايون

VISIT OF JAYWUN, THE RESEARCH VESSEL OF THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY ABU DHABI

This immersive visit promises engaging dialogue with Jaywun's experts and world-leading researchers from Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi's Ocean Institute, providing a platform for insightful discussions on ocean preservation and marine biology.





HE Nicolas Niemtchinow

HE Nicolas Niemtchinow is the Ambassador of France to the UAE. Former student of the National School of Administration (ENA), the Paris Institute of Political Studies, and the Ecole Normale Supérieure, HE Nicolas Niemtchinow has held various positions at the Ministry of Defense, as well as within the French embassies in Russia and Jordan.

He has also served as ambassador, permanent representative of France to the United Nations Office in Geneva, and Deputy Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO).



HE Francisco J. Chacón Hernández

HE Francisco J. Chacón Hernández is the Ambassador of the Republic of Costa Rica to the UAE. Born in San José, Costa Rica on July 8th, 1967. Studied at the Costa Rican University General Studies in Collective Communication Sciences. Then he did his bachelor degree in International Relations at the Autonomous University of Central America in San José, Costa Rica.

He obtained his Master of Arts degree in International Politics at the University of Paris IX in Brussels, Belgium. He has been the Chief of Cabinet to the Deputy Foreign and Worship Minister, Professor of International Relations, Stage at the European Parliament/ Office of Dr. Otto von Habsburg, Minister-Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the Organization of America States, at the Embassy of Costa Rica to the Kingdom of Belgium, at the Embassy of Costa Rica to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and at the mission of Costa Rica to the European Union. He has been Co-chairman of the Biregional Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism European Union-Latin American and the Caribbean on anti-drugs traffic policy.

He was a member of the Political Dialogue negotiations team/Association Agreement between the European Union and Central America. He was Minister- Counsellor, and Consul-General at the Embassy of Costa Rica in Canada, for a period of time he was Charge des Affairs a.i. at this Embassy. Since 2016 he has been honored to be Ambassador in Special Mission to the Gulf The Cooperation Council States. Before being appointed he was the Deputy Director- General of Foreign Policy at the Foreign and Worship Ministry. Since June 2017 he has been appointed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United Arab Emirates.

The Ambassador speaks fluent English and French; Spanish being his mother tongue. He enjoys reading politics and social books also he enjoys to do charitable work. He is very interested in cancer research and cancer relieve projects. His hobbies are swimming and watching football.



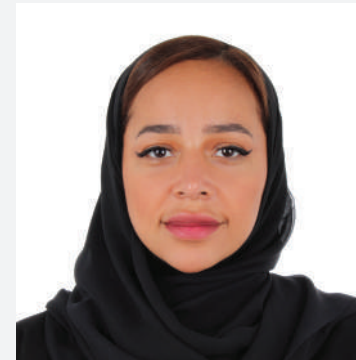
Prof Nathalie Martial-Braz

Nathalie Martial-Braz is the Vice Chancellor of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi. She has been a professor of private law and agrégé des Universités since 2011. She is an honorary member of the Institut Universitaire de France. She wrote her doctoral thesis on Security Interest on intellectual property rights, which was published in 2007 by PUF Aix-Marseille. She is the author of numerous publications on digital law (Daloz, JCP, Daloz IP/IT, RDBF). She is also co-author of the book "Droit Français des données à caractère personnel" (French Data protection Law) published in January 2020 by Daloz. Nathalie Martial-Braz is also scientific co-director of the journal Communication Commerce électronique (Lexis-Nexis).

She has been working at University Paris Cité since 2014 and heads the digital department of the Centre de droit des affaires et de gestion de l'Université de Paris (CEDAG), of which she was elected director in November 2022 for the next term 2024-2028. Since September 2021, she has been delegated to Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi.

She has been co-director of the Intellectual and Digital Property Department of Trans Europe Experts since its creation in 2009. In 2020, Nathalie Martial-Braz founded and co-directed at University Paris Cité with Professor Anne Debet, Professor of Private Law and member of the CNIL, the first Master's degree exclusively dedicated to Data Protection Law.

Nathalie Martial-Braz is regularly interviewed by the public institutions in charge of digital issues, thanks to her recognised expertise in financial and securities law, as well as in intellectual property and digital law, and particularly in the area of data protection law. Her work on the 'uberisation' and 'platformisation' of society, on social networks, on the digital economy in general such as fintechs and cryptoassets, and on the economics of health data, all of which has been published, has given rise to expert missions for the European Parliament, the French Council of State, the French Ministry of Health, the UNCITRAL and members of French or European Parliament responsible for reporting on these subjects.



Hiba Al Shehhi

Hiba is the Director of Biodiversity at the Ministry of Climate Change & Environment. She is an ecologist and a national speaker at many multilateral biodiversity-related conventions. She holds a Master's in Ecology, specialising in insect studies. As a Scuba diver, she spends her time surrounded by nature volunteering and assisting with different studies and awareness-raising activities.

Hiba has many years of experience working in the hospitality industry and the Government of the UAE. She was awarded the His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Award for the best youth in the federal government of the UAE for her contribution and determination to conserve biodiversity.



HE Ahmed Abdulmuttaleb Baharoon

Ahmed Baharoon has a Bachelor's degree in Business Management and is the Executive Director of Environmental Information Science & Outreach Management sector (EISOM) at the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD). For over a decade, he has managed environmental data & information, science, outreach, and education within EAD.

Ahmed leads a team of professionals identifying environmental research knowledge gaps, managing extensive data collected by EAD's field scientists, and developing and disseminating a range of scientifically credible environmental information products to stakeholders, enabling them to make better-informed decisions. He is currently leading the establishment of the Abu Dhabi Environmental Research Network (ADERN) which is the first formal network bringing academics and researchers together to focus on addressing the environmental research priorities of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

In addition to his role as Executive Director, he is also Acting Director of the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI), responsible for a wide range of international scientific collaborations, including studies on Blue Carbon, Climate Change, biodiversity and The President of EAD Human Recourses Committee. Before his appointment as Executive Director, Ahmed was the Head of Communications at the Emirates Falconers Club, Abu Dhabi, where he was involved in initiatives on falcon migration, breeding, and traditional hunting activities.

He is a Board Member of Arabian Center for Climate and Environmental Sciences (ACCESS), New York University Abu Dhabi.



Ashok Adicéam

Ashok Adicéam works at the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs with Ambassador Olivier Poivre d'Arvor where he is in charge of international mobilization for the Ocean stakeholders since October 2021. He was the Ambassador's Deputy for the organization of the One Ocean Summit (Brest, February 2022), he was then entrusted with the mission of prefiguring the Ocean Conference 3 (Nice, June 2025).

For half of his career, he has been in office as director of French Institutes abroad (United States, United Kingdom, India, Nigeria) and for the other half, at the head of private philanthropic foundations where he pursued his engagement for culture on four continents, especially in the cities of Shanghai, New Delhi and Venice.

Since thirty years, as director of leading international organisations and organizer of world-class public events, he strives to implement sustainable transformative policies and actions in the fields of education, culture, science and arts.

He is a member of the organizing committee of the Barcelona Conference on the Decade of the Ocean (April 2024), the Forum on Blue Economy and Finance in Monaco (chaired by Pascal Lamy, in June 2025) and the Summit of Coastal Cities and Regions on the Rise of the Oceans (chaired by Christian Estrosi, Mayor of Nice).



Stéphanie Ockenden

Stephanie is Deputy Head of the Secretariat for the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, based at the World Resources Institute.

In this role, Stephanie spearheads the activities of the 'Ocean Panel' - a unique global initiative of now 18 serving world leaders, representing 50% of global coastlines and 45% of the world's EEZ, who are collectively working to build momentum towards a sustainable ocean economy.

A key focus for the Ocean Panel is to promote knowledge-based decision making and solutions for the ocean that benefit people, nature and the economy.

Stephanie is a passionate environmental professional and strategic analytical leader with over 18 years of experience in roles across the UK Civil Service and internationally. Building on her degrees in Economics and Development, Stephanie thrives on working at the policy to evidence interface, with skills in policy, strategy and negotiations, across domestic and international environmental policy, including on ocean, climate change, and environmental finance.



Marina Antonopoulou

Marina Antonopoulou is the Senior Director of Climate Change and Nature Conservation at Emirates Nature-WWF. She leads a multi-disciplinary team of experts and oversees a diverse portfolio of projects that includes corporate engagement on climate action, place-based biodiversity conservation that brings multiple socio-economic benefits, as well as working with local communities and entrepreneurs to build bankable nature-based solutions.

With over 18 years of experience in nature conservation and sustainability Marina has led the development of strategic plans for Emirates Nature-WWF, provided expert advice to UAE climate and biodiversity policies and plans, as well as successfully rolled out priority conservation projects. She has forged strong partnerships with key stakeholders in the UAE and the wider region including public and private sector, academia and NGOs. Marina is also an active member of WWF's global Sustainable Blue Economy and Ocean-Climate Working Groups.

Previously, Marina led the implementation of environmental impact assessments and sustainability strategies for numerous private development projects in the MENA region working for private consultancy firms. She holds an Environmental Science Masters' Degree with the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow; an Executive Certificate in Sustainable Finance with the London Institute of Banking and Finance and ADGMA; and a Diploma in International Oceans Law and Policy with the Rhodes Academy of University of Virginia.



Admiral Christophe Prazuck

Admiral (2S) Christophe Prazuck is the current Director of the Ocean Institute at Sorbonne University Alliance in Paris. He was Chief of the French Navy from 2016 to 2020, from 2012 to 2016 Vice-admiral and HR director for the French navy and Rear-admiral chief of the French naval special forces in Lorient from 2010 to 2012. Admiral Christophe Prazuck has a Ph.D. in physical oceanography from the NPGS in Monterey (USA).



Prof Tarik Meziane

Tarik Meziane is a professor at the National Museum of Natural History (MNHN) in Paris France. He is the director of BOREA's research center (95 researchers, engineers and technicians) dedicated to study aquatic organisms and ecosystems. BOREA is sponsored by several French institutions including MNHN, CNRS and Sorbonne University. He has a strong experience in food web ecology of wetlands and in OM qualitative characterization of different habitats (coastal, tropical, polar, rivers and lakes).

More recently he launched several studies on blue carbon cycle mainly in mangrove ecosystems.



Prof Jean-Luc Jung

JLJ is a full professor at the French "Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle". He is head of the Dinard's marine station. He studies the diversity of mobile marine (mega)fauna using molecular approaches, with a particular but not exclusive focus on mammals.

He contributes to the development and use of molecular tools for species identification and recognition, and uses molecular ecology and population genetics approaches to characterize intraspecific genetic groups, to explain their origin(s) and identify their possible variations, particularly those induced by behaviors and knowledge specific to certain social groups and/or by environmental changes.

The primary aim of his work is fundamental understanding. In addition, when applied to marine conservation, it is also of great interest in terms of knowledge and monitoring of biodiversity, particularly with regard to the impact of environmental changes of anthropogenic origin on marine fauna.

For several years, he has been optimizing taxonomic assignments of animal species based on molecular data ("DNA barcode" approaches in particular), and contributing to the implementation of approaches for studying the diversity of mobile marine fauna based on environmental DNA (eDNA) analyses. Since 2019, in collaboration with the OFB, he has led campaigns to analyze marine macrofauna using eDNA in marine protected areas in the Iroise Sea and the French West Indies.



Prof Olivier Adam

Olivier Adam is a full professor at Sorbonne University, Paris (France). Expert in bioacoustics, he studies sounds emitted by cetaceans to describe their populations and their societies. He is currently working on 3 scientific projects : interactions between mothers and calves in humpback whales, social behaviors in sperm whales and analysis of underwater soundscapes (<https://sciences.sorbonne-universite.fr/portraits/olivier-adam>). He is the author of more than 60 scientific articles. He is the co-organizer of international conferences, including the DCLDE workshop (<https://dclde2024.com/>) and the HWWC congress (<https://www.hwwc.mg>).

During 2021-22, he organized 3 webinars, on the noise pollution in the oceans (<https://oceanambassadors.co.uk/shush-noise-in-the-ocean-sorbonne-university>), on the blue economy (<https://oceanambassadors.co.uk/blueco-can-the-economy-of-the-oceans-really-be-sustainable>), and about the ethics for the Oceans (<https://oceanambassadors.co.uk/ethics-for-ocean>).

He is involved in scientific mediation, with interviews in newspapers, tv, radio (<https://www.radiofrance.fr/personnes/olivier-adam>) and exhibitions. He was the curator of the whale exhibition, named Baleinopolis, that held at the Palais de la Porte Dorée in Paris, France (<https://youtu.be/gRbQR77TrRM>), of the photo exhibition called L'Océan c'est Vivant ! that was shown in Paris in 2022 and member of the scientific committee of the exhibition Musicanimale at the Philharmonie de Paris in 2022-23 (<https://philharmoniedeparis.fr/fr/activite/exposition/24601-musicanimale>).



Hervé Claustre

Hervé Claustre is a senior CNRS research scientist whose main research activities rely on the development interdisciplinary approaches at the frontiers of marine biology, chemistry and optics for the study and understanding of biogeochemical processes responsible of the variability of stocks and fluxes of matter in the upper ocean. For more than 15 years, a large part of his effort is dedicated to developing new observational techniques based on robots, especially profiling floats.

In this context, he is co-chairing the international BGC-Argo program and has been awarded two prestigious European Research Council grants dedicated to advance technology and science related to BGC-Argo. Hervé Claustre has authored or co-authored > 190 publications.



Dr Beatriz Garcia

Beatriz Garcia holds a degree in Law from the University of Brasilia (Brazil) and a Ph.D. in International Law from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva (Switzerland). She worked in the Climate Change and Sustainable Development branch of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva, managing climate and biodiversity projects.

She held positions as an advisor at government agencies in Brazil and organizations, such as the German Technical Cooperation, the Earth Council Geneva, and United Nations' agencies. She was a project manager for Forests Alive Carbon & Climate Solutions, a Sydney-based company specializing in carbon markets.

Beatriz is the author of the book 'The Amazon from an International Law Perspective' published by Cambridge University Press. She has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals, including Oxford's Journal of Environmental Law, Review of European, Comparative and International Environmental Law, Ecosystem Services, as well as book chapters and technical reports for UN agencies and environmental NGOs. She has developed a comparative law study on biosphere reserve zonation in the Asia Pacific region funded by UNESCO (2018-2019).

Beatriz has been part of a multi-stakeholder research project on tropical primary forests and climate change led by Griffith Climate Action Beacon. In 2023, Beatriz has co-authored a report, with the Brazilian Law firm Hernandez Lerner & Miranda, funded by the Climate and Land Use Alliance, on collective-use areas and the voluntary carbon market in the Brazilian Amazon.



Dr Yasser Al Wahedi

Serving as President of Abu Dhabi Maritime Academy, part of AD Ports Group, Dr Yasser Wahedi manages day-to-day operations at the Academy. He is responsible for developing and monitoring procedures and policies to ensure regulatory compliance, and is also charged with devising and implementing the Academy's overall long-term strategic plans.

Prior to joining AD Ports Group, Dr Al Wahedi garnered more than 16 years' experience in the field of industrial research and academia. A seasoned educator, Dr Al Wahedi has taught university programmes to more than 700 students spanning various fields in Engineering. He also supervised and co-supervised numerous graduate students pursuing M.Sc. and PhD.

His research includes authoring and co-authoring more than 40 journal publications including one featured in the prestigious Science. He has served in several research committees, and held the role of Chief Technology Officer at the Gas Research Center, where he became well versed in establishing research administrative procedures and policies, managing project portfolios valued at USD 32 million, and directly managing research projects worth USD 3.2 million.

A committed and noteworthy inventor, Dr Al Wahedi is a patent holder of two granted patent and three filed patents. Dr Al Wahedi received his PhD in Chemical Engineering from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities in the United State ranked third over USA in 2015.



Jean-Baptiste Longin

Jean-Baptiste Longin is married with two kids. He is currently based in Dubai and act as Managing Director for CMA CGM in the UAE, Oman and Qatar. As an experienced business leader, high performer and problem solver with over 15 years' experience, he has built sound technical know-how on the shipping industry. He is quick to identify and resolve supply chain challenges and has been instrumental in building lasting global relationships in the business.

Jean-Baptiste has held general management roles previously in East Africa and Canada, with a constant drive for business development and organisation's optimization, always with an important human touch.

Since joining CMA CGM HQ in 2008 as Commercial Area Manager, he has risen through the ranks holding various leadership positions in Asia and UAE in the Trade & Commercial verticals, prior taking over general management responsibilities.



Prof Philippe Lebaron

Philippe Lebaron was Vice-President in charge of Economic Partnerships at Sorbonne University until December 2021. He is now senior advisor for economic partnerships at the presidency office. He is a full professor in biology and ecology at the marine research institute in Banyuls-sur-mer. He was director of this institute from 2005 to 2015. His research is mainly focused in marine microbiology and biotechnology.

He was president of the national program for the development of public/private joint laboratories between academic laboratories and industries from 2015 to 2018. He has a long experience in industrial collaborations.



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