

OUR OCEAN, AN OCEAN FOR LIFE

The European Union will host the fourth high-level Our Ocean conference in Malta on 5 and 6 October 2017. In the spirit of the successful 2014, 2015 and 2016 editions, the conference aims to inspire and empower a new generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, scientists and civil society to identify solutions and commit to actions for safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed oceans.

It follows on from the previous conferences and complements the EU's Ocean Governance Initiative, which sets out an agenda for ensuring the future of the oceans around the world. Nearly 1000 participants are expected at this visually engaging and interactive 2-day event, including heads of state and government; foreign, economy, environment and fisheries ministers; and other established and up-and-coming ocean leaders in government, business, finance, science and civil society. Young and cutting-edge innovators and entrepreneurs are to share the stage with well-known and dynamic global leaders in ocean conservation.

Time to act

The Our Ocean spirit is well established. Previous conferences have seen a tremendous wave of commitments and billions of euros pledged. Our Ocean 2017 will continue to focus on four main themes: marine protected areas, sustainable fisheries, marine pollution, and climate-related impacts on the ocean.

While maintaining a global reach, the location of Our Ocean 2017 will highlight the particular importance of action in countries around the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Indian Ocean.

Commitments will be sought not only from government representatives, but also from business leaders in ocean energy, blue biotechnology, aquaculture and fisheries, as well as from technologists, plastics producers, waste management companies, retailers and producers, financing institutions, the research community and civil society, including philanthropies and NGOs. Our Ocean will also address additional challenges such as maritime, economic or environmental security, migration and capacity building.

Delivering on commitments made at previous conferences is a test of legacy: tracking their progress and celebrating completion will be a key part of the next conference. With a focus on high-level engagement, partnership and action, Our Ocean continues to complement and drive other international efforts, such as delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals under Agenda 2030.

Creating a legacy

Side events, entertainment, social media and an education outreach will be used to involve more stakeholders, especially the younger generation. A student project in Malta will focus on youth engagement in ocean advocacy. A communication campaign will raise awareness and call for action on marine litter. As the Our Ocean conferences have demonstrated over the past years, the global community acknowledges the importance of one of the most precious resources on our planet and takes action to protect it.