



Theme 3

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE YOUTH OCEAN PARLIAMENT

**Wednesday 7th November
(Parallel Session - afternoon)**

Chair: Manuel Cira
Rapporteur: Dylan Furnell



Youth Ocean Parliament Introduction

Manuel Cira

Coordinator, World Ocean Network / Head of Cultural Services, NAUSICAA

Today, it is essential for young people to involve themselves even more in ocean stewardship and governance and become acquainted with the impact that climatic changes, globalisation and international turmoil will have on their future.

As future decision makers, managers, consumers and users of coastal and ocean resources, young people must be aware of the significant role that they can play in securing their future and that of generations to come. Their involvement is critical to determining whether existing efforts in ocean management will be continued over time. They must be given a legitimate right and duty to intervene in subsequent decisions concerning the ocean, but also their proposals must be listened to.

The Youth Ocean Parliament (YOP) held on the occasion of *Pacem in Maribus* in Malta in November 2007, assembled 30 young people aged 17-28 from Australia, Japan, Thailand, Brazil, Egypt, Morocco, Germany, Czech Republic, Malta, Russian Federation, Lithuania, and other countries. They were selected for their proficiency, motivation, achievements, involvement, and creativity. This was the first Youth Ocean Parliament, which involved young people in decision-making processes in their role as true citizens of the world.

The Youth Ocean Parliament offered young representatives the opportunity to air their views and ideas of bringing about changes. It was a chance for them to interact with other young people and professionals and to submit concrete proposals to the *Pacem in Maribus XXXII* participants.

The aim of the first Youth Ocean Parliament was to produce a common agenda of action of a comprehensive long term mechanism for youth cooperation in the international decision making processes on the issues of ocean research, management and protection, and to establish continuity beyond the conference to act as a lobby on the decisions taken.

The young people arrived in Malta geared up with a project or an idea presenting a global theme or a regional issue about maritime policy in their region that they had worked out in advance to YOP, and a proposal of action in link with it. Themes and avenues for consideration had been suggested to them such as biodiversity, land-based pollution, maritime law, citizenship of the ocean, etc. The projects were presented and debated first at a series of informal meetings and poster sessions. Next, the youth attended the plenary and workshop sessions of PIM XXXII and exchanged with specialists.

The sittings of the Youth Ocean Parliament were opened by Awni Behnam, President of the International Ocean Institute and Philippe Vallette, Co-chair, World Ocean Network / General Manager, NAUSICAA, at the Parliament House of Malta, Valletta. The young people worked in thematic workshops convened by David Raphael Busuttil, Executive Director, Fondation de Malte and with the help of Christine Cassar, a rapporteur and Dylan Furnell, a participant of the PIM XXXI regional youth forum, Australia, 2005. The sittings of the Youth Ocean Parliament were closed by The Hon. Anton Tabone, the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta.

The young people formulated their views and proposals in a final declaration. The YOP final declaration (see here below) was then read out before delegates and participants of the final session of PIM XXXII.

At the end of the event each young participant received their own Passport of the Citizen of the Ocean, a symbol of their commitment to act for the benefit of marine environment.



Young people are able to continue their work after PIM XXXII on a dedicated Internet platform <http://youthworldoceannetwork.spaces.live.com/>, where they share their ideas with their peers, exchange and post their proposals. Moreover, the representatives of the YOP have started to participate in regional youth parliaments such as European Youth Oceans Forum, *Let European youth take part in ocean governance*, that was held on the occasion of The Blue Planet Forum *Acting together for the future EU maritime policy* in Brussels on 27-28 November 2007.

The participation of young people in the decision making processes about the future of the Blue Planet underlines the ever-growing need to involve young generations in the preservation of the ocean and its responsible exploitation, whether with regard to fishing, maritime transport or the preservation of biodiversity.



YOUTH OCEAN PARLIAMENT FINAL DECLARATION

Sato-Umi
Our Link with the Ocean
Our Pledge to the Ocean

Pacem in Maribus XXXII
Malta – November 2007

We would like to thank the International Ocean Institute and World Ocean Network for integrating young people into the Pacem in Maribus framework by convening the first international Youth Ocean Parliament

We would also like to thank the Maltese government for hosting Pacem in Maribus XXXII as well as the Youth Ocean Parliament on the island of Malta, marking the 40 years' anniversary of the historic speech of Arvid Pardo on the seabed as common heritage of humankind

Our sincere thanks to Fondation de Malte for the invaluable support and input provided to the Youth Ocean Parliament





Introduction

We the participants of the first international Youth Ocean Parliament, from all over the world, have come together to express our thoughts, concerns and recommendations on the state of the ocean.

These thoughts are summarized and embodied in this final declaration, which has an overarching focus on the use of education and the media in raising awareness on ocean sustainability.

It moreover details our ideas on sustainable management of our ocean resources, the mitigation of climate change, ocean governance and the outlook for future generations.

- We are in agreement that the ocean has gone well beyond its operating capacity
- We deem that unless multilateral action is taken, not only will there be no progress, but that the state of the ocean and the marine environment shall deteriorate further.
- We believe in the rights of the future generations, and that it is our intrinsic duty to protect and ensure these rights

We gather at the Youth Ocean Parliament certain that, as young people, we have a valuable contribution to make to this debate, and pledging to take action upon this contribution.

However, we ask the international community to step up to the commitments it has taken, to take action and protect the ocean, its resources and environment, the life it affords us, as well as the right of the future generations to it.

Sato-Umi



We would like to introduce the concept of SATO-UMI, a Japanese word:

SATO means “where people live”

UMI means “the Ocean”

SATO-UMI is “the space where people, the coast and the ocean are together as one whole.”

Thus, the people, the coast and the ocean are all part of SATO-UMI.

SATO-UMI is a perfect summary of our vision of the interconnection between human beings and the sea.

Fostering Sustainable Use of Ocean Resources

Alarmed by the current exploitation of the ocean and its seabed, as well as the invaluable resources it affords us, we have come together to state our commitment for sensible use of the environment and for development that *‘meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’*, we recommend:

- a. The application of stricter measures to fisheries organizations
- b. The establishment of a heavily regulated seasonal fishing action plan to combat the issue of overfishing that is evident in many states



- c. A common international approach for the operation of such measures by governments worldwide, further enhanced by the flexibility of the system in different regions and states to meet the needs of the area of implementation
- d. An investigation into alternative forms of seafood production that are environment friendly, sustainable and economically viable
- e. The global banning of all harmful forms of fishing practice
- f. The creation of small scale fisheries that supply their own areas and countries with seafood and a small export system in place to further enhance this, whilst eliminating the damage currently created by large scale international trawlers
- g. The establishment of more varied use Marine Protected Areas
- h. The initiation of a global program that has the ability to change the mentality of the wider population, through the promotion of a personal approach to understanding society's effects on the world's ocean

Climate Change

Concerned by the effect of climate change on our environments, we ask the international community to live up to its commitments, specifically by:

- a. Enforcing its decisions and holding itself accountable for them, otherwise strongly considering the imposition of sanctions or fines
- b. Increasing security for people living in the already affected areas, particularly in coastal areas, through dyke and channel building, so as to alleviate the rise in sea water level
- c. Delivering financial and technological support to countries and areas where the environment-related imminent needs of people are not met due to lack of financial resources, either of national governments or local communities
- d. Enhancing ties between developed and developing states so as to provide energy alternatives whereby the environment in developing states would not suffer the same consequences that industrialization has caused in developed nations
- e. Providing a strong educational tool through which prevention of further degradation of the environment may occur, in all parts of the world

Ocean Governance

Deeply troubled by the rapid and incessant degradation of the oceans and seas, and in support of the recognition of the ocean as a public good for all humanity, we ask for the establishment of:

- a. A global ethics board, which we propose to name the United Oceans, that would be based on the preservation of the ocean environment, and that would, through the use of its legal framework, compel governments to comply to this preservation

The constitution of this board would comprise governments as well as civil society actors (specifically those involved in scientific, education and social issues), and whereby its regional-based constituency would tackle region-specific problems, whilst also offering a forum for consultation with the public, for more stakeholders to voice their opinions and be heard. Moreover, the executive decisions taken, based on existing international networks for data collection, would lead to executive actions, taken as a joint commitment between all countries and representatives.



Education, Training and Communications toward Sustainable Use of the Ocean

Education is not merely a static and formal component in the lives of many, but should provide formation that leads to citizenship and awareness in younger generations.

For this reason, we ask governments for:

- a. Basic education programs about the oceans for all children and citizens, including natural disasters, human impact, ecosystems, oceanography, global warming and
- b. Direct contact with the ocean through swimming lessons for children which, combined with ocean education and emergency training, would form a holistic educational and awareness-raising approach to ocean heritage preservation
- c. Intensive emergency training programs, such as designating two days per year to reach out to schools and the community on disaster preparedness
- d. Use of the world wide web to promote communication between schools, specifically between those in coastal regions and those in inland regions, whereby children who may never have come in contact with the sea may experience it through the eyes of their peers
- e. Use of visual media in the creation of a form of distance education, awareness raising and the communication of ocean issues to children and communities away from the sea

Commitment to the Future Generations

We call on national regional and international organizations and the citizens of the world to guarantee and protect the environment in which the rights of future generations may be exercised.

We demand that all stakeholders come together in responsible steps toward fulfilling the promises made to the international community and the citizens of the world.

For this reason we ask for:

- a. Access to education and formative experiences in learning, targeted towards raising awareness on the global and local issues of sustainable development
- b. A true commitment by governments and education policy makers to develop and enhance programs for formal and informal citizenship education, with a special focus on the protection of the natural environment
- c. We recommend the nomination of youth focal point within the International Ocean Institute

The Future of the Youth Ocean Parliament

We appreciate the opportunity given to us as young people to come together and in one voice communicate our hopes and concerns

Moreover, we recognize and look forward to a continuation of this debate through suitable and further extended channels

We are ourselves committed to the creation of a World Youth Ocean Network, possibly as an extension or under the auspices of, the World Ocean Organization, which will take a lead role in the preparation of future Youth Ocean Parliaments and youth representation on environmental issues within other regional and global fora.



Conclusion

As youth living on a planet of which almost 70% is covered in water, we have come together to appeal to all stakeholders involved to protect this large segment of our planet – to protect the use of the life and resources it gives, to recognize its importance, and to enforce the decisions taken; decisions that will not only affect us, but that will have a long term effect on the future generations.

This is our commitment – is it yours?