

BLUE FOODS IN UNFCCC

Reflections from COP29 and looking ahead to 2025

Thank you for your interest in, and support for, better integration of blue/aquatic foods into national and international climate processes. Blue foods are a source of high-quality, low-carbon, affordable nutrition for billions of people yet are highly vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate. Giving aquatic foods a seat at the climate table can ensure that their vital contributions are sustained and enhanced under future climates. Through this briefing we would like to share some reflections on how blue foods were represented at UNFCCC COP29 in Baku, and look ahead to key opportunities for aligning ocean, water, food, and climate agendas in 2025.

Aquatic foods at COP29

Aquatic foods were well represented in several official and Pavilion-led side events, receiving support from governments from every continent. Participants highlighted many adaptation and mitigation actions already being taken on the ground. Some key themes that stood out across these events include:

- The vital role of **small-scale fishers and fish farmers** – including Indigenous communities, women, and youth – in blue food systems, and the need to support **locally led adaptation** initiatives.
- The important role of **partnerships** (regional and global) and **cross-sectoral, inter-institutional collaboration** for effective aquatic food climate action.
- The close link between climate and nature, and the high potential for **nature-based solutions** in aquatic food systems to contribute to resilience and biodiversity.
- A high need for innovative **financing mechanisms to de-risk investments** and support equitable sharing of benefits.
- Bringing aquatic foods into food system transformation, including through integration in **Nationally Determined Contributions**.



Participants at the UNFCCC COP29 official side event “Aquatic Foods for Climate Action: Showcasing Solutions to Increase Ambition.” (Photo by IISD/ENB | Angeles Estrada Vigil)

On the negotiations side there were few aquatic food-specific agenda items, but several outcomes have the potential to inform future investment, implementation, and monitoring for this sector:

- The [New Collective Quantified Goal \(NCQG\)](#) set a goal of increasing climate financing to USD 300 billion annually by 2035, alongside an agreement for all parties to work together to scale up finance to developing countries to USD 1.3 trillion per year by 2035.
- Parties adopted the new [Global Goal of Adaption \(GGA\)](#). It launches the Baku Adaptation Roadmap and shifts the discussion of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to Bonn in June 2025. Parties will decide on a final list of adaptation indicators at UNFCCC COP30 in Bélem, offering an opportunity to ensure indicators, approaches, targets, and metrics are suitable for the aquatic food sector's adaptation needs and goals.
- The [Sharm-el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security \(SJWA\)](#) adopted a [4-page text](#) that primarily focuses on development of a [new online portal](#) for “sharing information on projects, initiatives, and policies for increasing opportunities for implementation of climate action to address issues related to agriculture and food security”.
- Of relevance to Blue Carbon objectives and projects: the adoption of [Article 6](#) – which outlines the final framework for how carbon markets will function under the Paris Agreement – makes the carbon crediting mechanism now fully operational.
- The [Lima Work Programme on Gender and Climate Change](#) was extended for another decade, reaffirming the importance of gender equality and advancing gender mainstreaming throughout UNFCCC – including in aquatic food systems.
- The [Loss and Damage Fund](#) is now operational. Pledges made during COP29 brought its total up from \$674 to \$759 million. Parties agreed that loss and damage would not be included under the NCQG finance and further discussions were deferred to SB62 in Bonn.
- **Belgium (Ulrik Lenaerts), Brazil (Carlos Márcio Bicalho Cozendey, 2025), and Fiji (Sivendra Michael, 2026)** [have been selected](#) as co-facilitators of the UNFCCC Ocean & Climate Change Dialogue 2025-2026.
- Happening at the same time as COP29, at the G20 Summit, the [Rio de Janeiro Leaders Declaration](#) made specific mention of the ocean, the [G20 Agriculture Ministers Declaration](#) took note of the Ocean20's recommendation to scale sustainable and resilient aquatic/blue food production, and France and Brazil put out a [joint declaration](#) on ocean protection.

Sources: [CGIAR Climate Impact Platform](#), [Oliver Camp's COP29 debrief](#), [Carbon Brief detailed summary of outcomes](#)

Events, opportunities, and deadlines for 2025

NDC Submissions

The deadline for submitting the 2025 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs 3.0) is set for February 2025. Parties can draw on [guidelines launched in 2024](#) to identify measures and targets for integrating aquatic foods into their NDCs.

Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work (SJWA)

There will be a hybrid SJWA workshop at SB62 in Bonn focusing on “Systemic and holistic approaches to implementation of climate action on agriculture, food systems and food security, understanding, cooperation and integration into plans.” **Parties and observers are invited to share their views on the subject of the workshop, options for its format, and suggested speakers by 1 March 2025**, offering an opportunity to ensure aquatic food systems are represented in the discussion alongside terrestrial agricultural systems.

Upcoming events

- [Our Ocean Conference](#) – April 28-30, Busan, Korea
- [UN Ocean Conference](#) – June 9-13, Nice, France
- [UNFCCC SB62](#) – June 16-26, Bonn, Germany
- UNFCCC COP30 – November 10-21, Belém, Brazil

Key publications

- NDC Guidelines “Integrating blue foods into national climate strategies” – [full report](#); webinar recordings for [Europe & the Americas](#), [Africa & the Middle East](#), and [Asia & the Pacific](#)
- FAO report “Climate change risks to marine ecosystems and fisheries” – [link](#)
- FAO report “Agrifood systems in nationally determined contributions: Global analysis” – [link](#)
- FAO report “Navigating the waters of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change A guide for the aquatic food sector” – [link](#)
- FAO policy brief “The fisheries and aquaculture adaptation finance gap” – [link](#)
- Ocean & Climate Platform “Fishing and aquaculture in a changing climate: Challenges and perspectives” – [link](#)
- Op-ed by the 2023-2024 Ocean & Climate Dialogue co-facilitators “COP29 must offer lifeline for ‘blue foods’ amid climate storm” – [English](#), [Portuguese](#), [Spanish](#)

For more information or to discuss opportunities for collaboration, contact:

Michelle Tigchelaar, WorldFish M.Tigchelaar@cgiar.org

Xuechan Ma, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Xuechan.Ma@fao.org

Tarub Bahri, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Tarub.Bahri@fao.org

Maximilian Schwarz, EBCD maximilian.schwarz@ebcd.org

Laura Anderson, Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions lauraand@stanford.edu

Karly Kelso, Aquatic Blue Food Coalition info@aquaticbluefood.org

List of aquatic foods events at COP29

Date	Host	Title	Links
Nov 14	Government of Tanzania	Sustainable Fisheries for Blue Economy in United Republic of Tanzania: Opportunities for Investment and Climate Action	
Nov 14	SEORS Official Side Event	Ocean & Climate Change Dialogue official meeting	Presentation
Nov 14	SEORS Official Side Event	OCEAN-CLIMATE-SOCIETY: Multisector approach for mitigation, adaptation, finance & capacity building	Details
Nov 16	UN-Oceans	Striving for Ambitious Ocean-Based Action: How UN-Oceans can support States in scaling up ocean-related actions, including in the context of the next round of NDCs	Details
Nov 18	Action on Food Hub	Climate-Ocean Change and Food Security: Exploring Adequate Mitigation, Adaptation and Financing	Write-up
Nov 18	SEORS Official Side Event	Aquatic Foods for Climate Action: Showcasing solutions to increase ambition	IISD summary Pictures
Nov 19	Ocean Pavilion	Catalyzing Sea Change: Bridging science, finance, and local action for resilient coastal communities	Recording
Nov 20	SEORS Official Side Event	Integrated approaches to ocean governance in the context of climate change, BBNJ Agreement and SDG14	Details
Nov 21	Food & Agriculture Pavilion	Harvesting change: Sustainable food systems for climate and biodiversity solutions	Details Recording
Nov 21	Marrakech Partnership	Ocean Action Day event – Ocean Breakthroughs: Towards resilient economies and societies	Details
Nov 21	SHARE Hub	Evidence-based innovations for nature-positive impact through aquatic food systems	
Nov 21	Africa Pavilion	Aquatic foods for climate resilient Blue Economy in Africa	
Nov 21	Marrakech Partnership	MP Implementation Lab – Ocean & Coastal Zones: “Ocean Breakthroughs from 1.5°C: Scaling ambition in NDCs”	Details
Nov 21	Food & Agriculture Pavilion	Innovative NDCs for food systems: Boosting ambition through agroecology, water, fisheries, and healthy diets	Details Recording