

RISE UP
for the Ocean
Annual Report 2025



Contents

Message form our Executive Director	3
Mission & Vision	4
From Call to Action to Network	4
How RISE UP Drives Change	5
RISE UP 2025 Key Metrics	6
The Ocean in 2025: Key events and Breakthoughts	7
Our Priorities	8
UNOC3 Highlight	25
Direction for 2026 and Beyond	29
Key Learnings	30
Acknoledgements	31

Message From Our Executive Director

Global ocean governance reached several critical milestones in 2025. The WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement entered into force, and the High Seas Treaty secured enough ratifications to take effect in January 2026.

Momentum behind the 30x30 target continued to grow, while the ocean gained greater recognition in climate and biodiversity discussions.

At the same time, coastal communities, small-scale fishers (SSF) and Indigenous Peoples, who steward vast marine territories, remain underrepresented in decisions that shape their livelihoods and ecosystems.

Ensuring their knowledge, rights and leadership are reflected in global policy processes is essential for effective and equitable ocean governance.

RISE UP for the Ocean works to advance civil society influence by connecting actors, aligning priorities and amplifying frontline leadership in global ocean decision-making. Throughout the year momentum for stronger ocean protection continued to build. Forty countries supported precautionary approaches to deep-sea mining, while nations such as Ghana advanced efforts to strengthen fisheries management and safeguard fish stocks for coastal communities.

A key moment was the third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3), where RISE UP supported representatives from small-scale fishers, Indigenous Peoples and civil society organisations in coordinated advocacy on deep-sea mining, fisheries subsidies, preferential access areas and ocean-climate action. Working groups and high-level side events highlighted the importance of co-development and co-governance, while locally managed approaches were emphasized within the broader 30x30 conversation.

This work is made possible through the RISE UP network. Across regions, partners, staff and community leaders collaborated through workshops, webinars, micro-grants and digital platforms to sustain engagement, share knowledge and amplify frontline voices in global ocean governance.

Looking ahead to 2026, we will deepen collaborations across the network and with frontline communities to defend the ocean, advance rights-based governance and translate global commitments into action on the water.

Together with civil society organisations, small-scale fishers and fishworkers, Indigenous Peoples, we will continue advancing the alliances needed to secure just and equitable ocean governance that sustains ecosystems and supports resilient communities.



Flora McMorris
RISE UP Executive Director

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Flora McMorris', positioned below the printed name.

From Call to Action to Network

The Blue Call to Action was launched in 2019 as a global advocacy initiative aimed at strengthening ocean protection and mobilizing civil society around key international ocean policy processes. Initially shaped through early convenings that brought organizations together around shared objectives, the initiative expanded between 2019 and 2021 by building a growing network of endorsing organizations and adapting to online engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Following an institutional transition in 2022, it evolved into a more independent network and increased its visibility through participation in major global ocean conferences and policy discussions. From 2023 onward, the initiative entered a phase of strategic consolidation and expansion, establishing governance structures, thematic clusters and partnerships while continuing to grow its global membership. By 2025–2026, the network had expanded to more than 760 organizations across 68 countries, reflecting its evolution into a more structured and influential platform for coordinated ocean advocacy, now known as *RISE UP for the Ocean*.

Mission

Unite civil society and community voices to influence policy and decisions for a healthy, just and resilient Ocean.

Vision

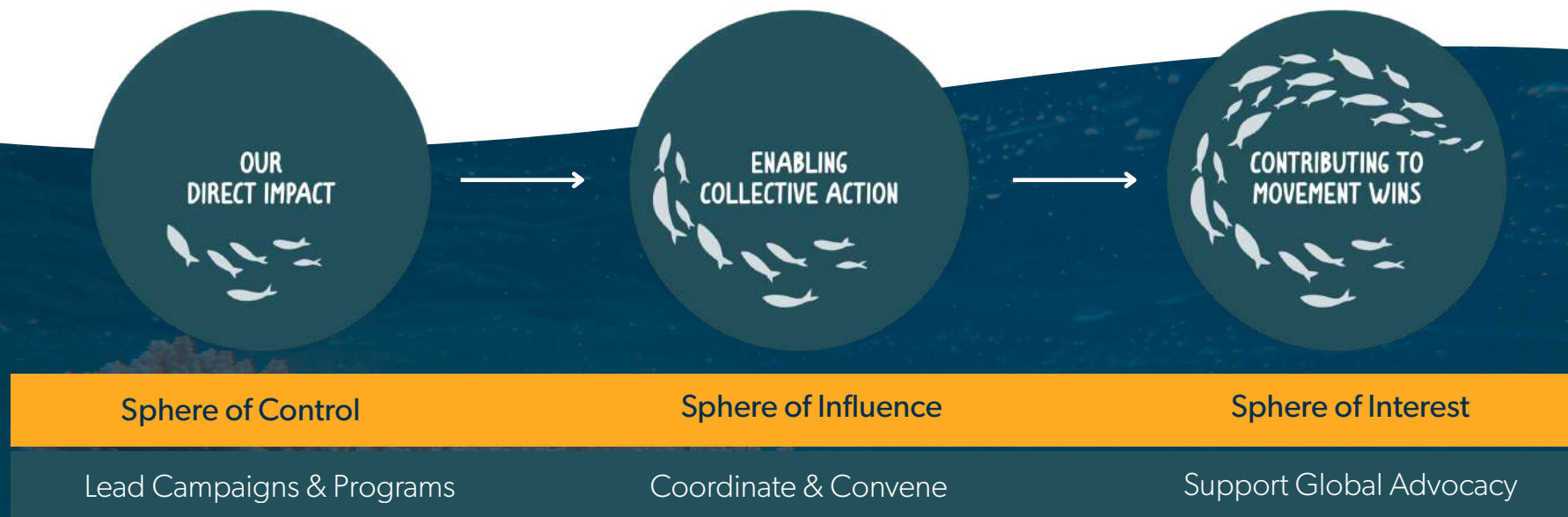
A global movement of coastal communities and civil society driving lasting change for resilient societies and a thriving ocean.

How RISE UP drives change

Our work operates across three interconnected spheres of impact that reflect different levels of influence. At the core is Direct Impact, the programs, campaigns and initiatives we design and deliver ourselves. Beyond this is Enabling Collective Action, where we work with partners and allies to achieve shared outcomes. Finally, we contribute to Movement Wins, broader systemic changes that no single organization can achieve alone.

This framework reflects the difference between attribution and contribution. While we can attribute specific outputs to our work, lasting change, such as protecting marine ecosystems, influencing policy, and shifting narratives, comes through collective action. Our role is to catalyze collaboration and support broader movements that drive systemic change.

This report is organized around our three spheres of impact and four strategic priorities, presenting progress thematically to reflect ongoing momentum and iterative learning rather than a chronological sequence.



RISE UP 2025 Key Metrics



Advocacy

89

organizations from 28 countries
co-signed UNOC3 statement

25

member initiatives showcased at
COP30 through the Virtual Ocean
Pavillion

129

Network members endorsed
RISE UP public statements

8

SSF leaders supported at UNOC3
(5 continents)

4

fellows supported to attend
UNFCCC COP30



Network

310+

mobilized partners

22

blog articles, including 10 by
guest authors

280+

members in UNOC3 Whatsapp
coordination group

92

members in Ocean & Climate Cluster
(37 countries | 7 regions)

10

member calls (avg 70 participants)



Reach

3,300

subscribers to the Navigator
Newsletter

4,163

followers accross 5 social channels

126,318

total impressions on LinkedIn and
Facebook

9

Newsletter editions with 32%
average email open rate

750+

attendees and views online and
on demand in webinars and
online sessions



The Ocean in 2025: key Events and Breakthroughs

Mar - ISA Council Meeting (Part I)

32+ countries called for a moratorium on deep-sea mining, highlighting environmental risks, cultural heritage and regulatory concerns, while fast-track corporate efforts were condemned.

Jun 2025 - UN Ocean Conference 2025 (UNOC3)

More than 60 heads of state attended, signaling unprecedented political attention to ocean issues. Brazil and France launched the Blue NDC Challenge.

Aug - Ghana expands Inshore Exclusion Zone

Ghana extended its IEZ to 12 nautical miles, including co-management and strengthening protections for small-scale fishers.

Sept - High Seas (BBNJ) Treaty reaches 60 ratifications

Nov - Earthshot Prize

The High Seas Alliance won the "Revive Our Oceans" category

Apr - Our Ocean Conference, Busan

pledged 277 ocean action commitments, mobilizing about \$9.1 billion for marine protection, sustainable fisheries, ocean-climate solutions and pollution reduction

Jul - ISA Council Meeting (Part II)

Delegates completed a second reading of the draft deep-sea mining regulations, but no Mining Code was adopted due to unresolved disagreements among member states.

Sept - WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies enters into force

Ratified by 102 WTO members, the agreement prohibits subsidies contributing to illegal or overfished stocks.

Oct - IUCN World Conservation Congress

Motions 032 and 035 were adopted by IUCN members, reinforcing global commitments to safeguard vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems and biodiversity hotspots.

Nov - UNFCCC COP30

Ocean action featured in climate discussions, with initiatives such as Wave Forward: The Blue Thread advancing ocean-based climate solutions.



The background of the slide is a collage of four nature-themed images. The top-left image shows two people in a small boat on a body of water. The top-right image shows a dense mangrove forest with trees and rocks. The bottom-left image shows a jellyfish underwater. The bottom-right image shows a whale's tail fluke emerging from the water.

Our Priorities

Supporting Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

The background of the slide is a photograph of two fishermen in a small, traditional wooden boat on the ocean. The fishermen are wearing hats and are actively engaged in their work, possibly pulling a net or handling fish. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is not visible, creating a serene yet focused atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by various shades of blue, which complements the theme of marine fisheries.

The Challenge

Small-scale fisheries (SSF) are central to global food security, livelihoods and local economies, employing over 90% of the world's capture fishers—around 60 million people. Yet their access to marine resources is increasingly threatened by industrial fishing, climate change and weak governance. Limited recognition of their rights and restricted participation in decision-making continue to challenge the resilience of small-scale fishing communities.

Our Approach

RISE UP increases the visibility and influence of small-scale fisheries in global ocean governance. Through coordinated advocacy, capacity building and knowledge exchange, the network connects community priorities with international policy processes and supports stronger participation in decision-making. This approach contributes to equitable and sustainable small-scale fisheries.

Our Priorities

Supporting SSF Engagement in WTO Fisheries Subsidies Implementation

Ahead of the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement entering into force in September, RISE UP engaged with members states supporting its implementation. In May, we co-organized a seven-country regional workshop in Chennai, India, with the Bay of Bengal Programme, The Pew Charitable Trusts and the International Institute for Sustainable Development. The workshop brought together government representatives, regional experts and small-scale fisheries representatives to discuss what implementation would involve, as well as the potential risks and opportunities for coastal communities.

Following ratification, we advanced global capacity by partnering with African Confederation of Professional Organisations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA), IISD and Stop Funding Over Fishing Coalition to co-host a global webinar '*Strengthening Small-Scale Fisheries Engagement in WTO Fisheries Subsidy Agreement Implementation*'. The session unpacked the Agreement's implications and equipped SSF leaders to actively engage in national-level implementation processes.



+250
participants
engaged with the
global WTO webinar,
live and online.



2
global
convenings
on the WTO



Offshore Wind Project

RISE UP initiated a project with PIE Climate to document community perspectives on offshore wind development across Africa, Asia and South America, embedding social justice and local knowledge into ocean-climate planning.

Building on this, a regional workshop in Rio de Janeiro brought together key stakeholders to advance offshore wind development, addressing regulation, infrastructure and community engagement for a just and coordinated energy transition.

Further development will continue in 2026.



From left to right: Dr. Sivaja Nair (RISE UP Programme Manager), Dr. Lilian J. Ibengwe (Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Tanzania), Nancy Onginjo-Ramkalawan (President, Seychelles Fishing Boat Owners Association), Ms. Dinna L. Umengan (Executive Director, Tambuyog Development Center, Indonesia), Dr. P. Krishnan (Director, Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation), Dr. Aminath Hussain Shareef (Minister of State for Fisheries and Ocean Resources, Maldives), Nana Kweigyah (Head, Canoe and Fishing Gear Owners Association, Ghana) and Ms. Barkha Mossae (IUCN).

Advancing Equity in Small-Scale Fisheries Policy

Through our SSF cluster work, RISE UP convened governments, regional fisheries bodies and SSF organizations to translate equity commitments into policy action. These conversations continued at the side event at UNOC3, *Advancing Equity in Small-Scale Fisheries*, where the focus shifted firmly toward implementation and accountability.

During the event, the Government of Maldives committed to developing a National Plan of Action to implement the SSF Guidelines, a concrete step toward ensuring small-scale fisheries are formally recognized, protected and supported within national policy frameworks.

In parallel, eight SSF leaders were supported to participate fully in UNOC3 through funding, Blue Zone access and speaking opportunities. Their presence ensured that small-scale fisheries leaders were not only included, but visible and influential in shaping global ocean discussions.



8 SSF leaders



5 continents



1 message

Equity on the Ocean Agenda at UNOC3



Global Movement Wins for Small-Scale Fisheries

2025 was a year of great progress for the global movement supporting SSF, human rights and fair ocean governance. Advocacy and storytelling from coastal communities helped secure the inclusion of SSF and human rights language in the outcomes of the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3).

Another key achievement was the recognition of preferential access areas (PAA) for SSF in both the UNOC3 Political Declaration and the Nice Ocean Action Plan. This milestone reflects years of efforts by small-scale fishers, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and civil society to ensure fair access to marine resources and recognition of traditional livelihoods.

Progress continued at the World Conservation Congress (WCC), where RISE UP co-hosted the session “*The 15 of 30 Revolution: IPLCs and OECMs at the Frontline of Achieving Target 3*” showcased the leadership of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in conservation. The growing use of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) highlights a shift toward community-led approaches to achieve global biodiversity goals.



Championing Ocean-Based Climate Action

The Challenge

Coastal and Indigenous communities play a key role in protecting oceans and tackling climate change, but they are often excluded from global decision-making. This leads to funding gaps, limited influence, and a disconnect between international policies and on-the-ground realities.

Our Approach

RISE UP bridges this gap by supporting communities to actively shape ocean-climate policies. It connects local knowledge with global advocacy, strengthens community capacity and ensures their voices influence international platforms—promoting equitable, community-led solutions backed by both lived experience and scientific evidence.

Our Priorities

Launch and Development of the Ocean and Climate Cluster

In July 2025, the Ocean and Climate Cluster was launched, creating a new platform to connect civil society actors working at the intersection of ocean and climate, rooted in community leadership. The Cluster fosters collaboration, supports collective advocacy and amplifies frontline perspectives in global policy spaces.



92
Cluster
Members



37
Countries



7
Regions

Connecting Policy to Frontline Solutions

We hosted the webinar *Understanding the Ocean and Climate Nexus: From International Policy to Frontline Solutions*, connecting global policy discussions with on-the-ground realities. The session offered shared tools and messaging for members and reached over 300 participants through live and recorded views.

Ahead of COP30, we interviewed Dr. Marinez Scherer, Special Envoy for the Ocean, to advance dialogue on the ocean's role in climate negotiations.



In Brazil, we created a national engagement group (...) This reflects the spirit of this COP, the concept of MUTIRÃO - a Brazilian word meaning 'working together toward a common goal.' RISE UP embodies the true spirit of MUTIRÃO.

Dr. Marinez Scherer, Special Envoy for the Ocean, in an online interview with RISE UP.

”



Advancing Grassroots Leadership in the Ocean–Climate Nexus

At UNOC3, over 30 members were convened to co-design a Grassroots Ocean–Climate Framework structured around five key pillars. During UNOC3, an in-person working session refined the Cluster’s structure, objectives and priority advocacy areas.

A core group and support group were established to guide the Cluster’s setup and strategic development. The Cluster’s first call brought together 53 participants from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean to discuss priorities and next steps.

Collective Action at UNFCCC COP30

RISE UP microgrants enabled four Cluster Fellows, three from Brazil and one Indigenous Caribbean youth from Aruba, to participate in COP30 and elevate grassroots ocean–climate leadership. Representing youth, coastal communities and Indigenous Peoples, they brought lived experience and practical solutions into high-level negotiations, reinforcing the call for inclusive, rights-based ocean–climate action and meaningful frontline leadership in global decision-making.



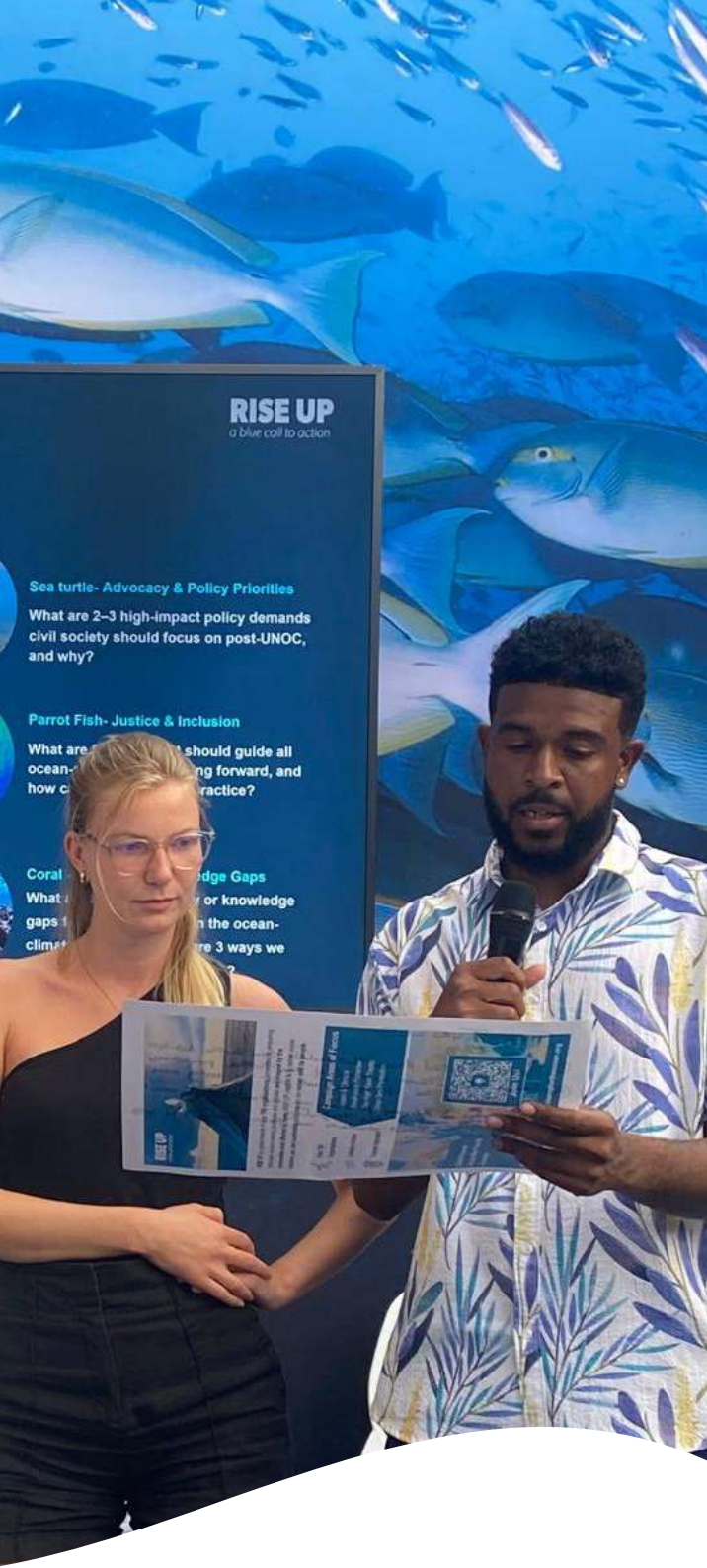
53
participants

attended the first Ocean & Climate Cluster Call



4
fellows

supported with microgrants to attend COP30



”

One of the most significant moments for me was participating in the UN Secretary General Youth Roundtable. As the only youth member from the Caribbean Islands, I was able to deliver a direct statement to the UN Secretary General, elevating the concerns and priorities of our region at the highest level. At the same time, I experienced first hand how exclusion can show up even within spaces designed for Indigenous participation. Too often, in the rooms dedicated to Indigenous peoples, I was marginalised and at times ostracised as the only Indigenous Caribbean person present. Despite this, I used the space to deliver interventions on our lack of representation and to advocate for follow up actions to ensure Caribbean Indigenous peoples are meaningfully included in UN processes and mechanisms going forward.

Nigel Maduro

Indigenous Land Defender & Caribbean Climate Advocate
Oranjestad, Aruba
COP30 fellow



”

During COP30, I spearheaded the articulation and mobilisation of the Coalition of Amazon Mangrove Guardians, a vital group composed of community leaders, youth, and women. My work focused on strengthening collective strategy and ensuring Amazonian coastal communities could define and advance their priorities in the COP space. This culminated in the development of a key document outlining the specific demands of Amazonian coastal communities, grounded in lived experience and frontline realities.

To amplify these priorities, I organised and moderated multiple panels centred on climate vulnerability, climate injustice, and the urgent need for mangrove protection as a pillar of equitable climate action. These included The Mangrove’s Urgent Call for Climate Action: Vulnerabilities, Climate Injustice, and Demands from Amazonian Coastal Communities, which elevated community led demands, and Our Mangrove Has Value, with People and Free of Oil, organised with the Cuíra Youth Network, highlighting the social, cultural, and ecological value of mangroves and resistance to extractive pressures (...).

Bruna Moraes

Coalition of Amazonian Mangrove Guardians, Brazil
COP30 fellow





Coordinating Ocean–Climate Action Across Key Global Moments

Activities continued at COP30 with a dedicated Virtual Ocean Pavilion (VOP) booth and the live panel *Frontlines of the Blue Future: Ocean–Climate Solutions Showcase*, highlighting 25 member initiatives that bridge science, traditional knowledge and locally led action across regions.

During New York Climate Week, in September, the Cluster co-hosted the high level event *From UNOC to Belém: Elevating the Ocean in the Climate Agenda* in collaboration with Peace Boat US, Oceano Azul Foundation and other partners. The event supported momentum from UNOC3 to COP30, reinforcing the ocean’s role within the global climate agenda.

25
member initiatives
showcased at COP30
through the VOP

1
Ocean-Climate
High-level event
New York Climate Week



Reinforcing Opposition to Deep-Sea Mining

The Challenge

Deep-sea ecosystems, essential for climate regulation, carbon storage, and ocean stability, face growing threats from mining—posing risks of irreversible damage amid limited scientific knowledge and evolving governance.

Our Approach

RISE UP mobilizes global networks of civil society, scientists, and frontline communities to influence policy, advocate for precautionary action, and protect biodiversity, climate functions, and ocean-dependent livelihoods.

Advocacy and Awareness on Deep-Sea Mining

ISA Council Intervention

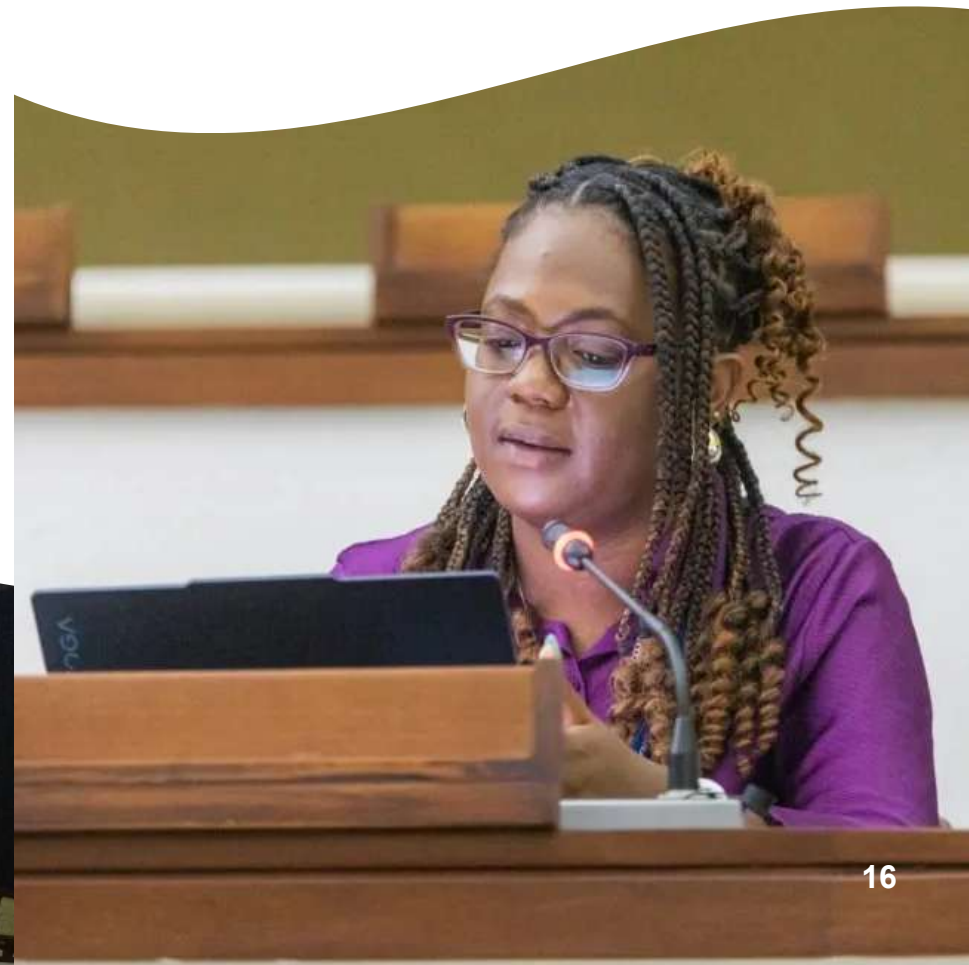
In March 2025, Khadija Stweart, RISE UP Senior Campaigner, delivered a formal intervention under the delegation of TBA21–Academy at the Council meeting of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) during the *Underwater Cultural Heritage Working Session*. The intervention called for enhanced transparency, precautionary decision-making and justice in deep-sea mining governance. It underscored the importance of safeguarding environmental integrity, upholding intergenerational equity and ensuring that the principle of the “common heritage of humankind” is meaningfully reflected in regulatory frameworks and Council deliberations.

Deep-Sea Mining Licence Advocacy

In response to the proposed sale of UK Seabed Resources Ltd to Glomar Minerals Ltd, a network mobilization toolkit was developed. It provided social media assets and email templates for partners and civil society actors to urge UK decision-makers to uphold the moratorium and reject the licence transfer. While the transfer ultimately proceeded, the mobilization increased public scrutiny, strengthened coordination across civil society and reinforced the call for policy coherence between the UK’s stated support for a moratorium and its domestic licensing decisions.

Deep-Sea Awareness & Education

Screenings of the documentary *Deep Rising* were held in educational institutions across India, raising awareness of deep-sea ecosystems, seabed mining risks and fostering informed dialogue on marine conservation.



Mobilization for the Deep Sea Protection

In 2025, RISE UP strengthened global efforts for deep sea protection through coordinated advocacy and engagement.

The Deep Debate (7 May) convened over 350 participants, with opening remarks from Luisa Araúz, Panama's Legal Advisor to the Minister of Environment, setting a tone of strong policy ambition.

A Day for the Deep (20 July) mobilized over 25 countries, with RISE UP network flagship events in London, Portugal and Pakistan.

Ahead of the ISA meetings, RISE UP, alongside EcoSeas Caribbean, the Sustainable Ocean Alliance, and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, called on the Governments of The Bahamas and Antigua and Barbuda to support a moratorium on deep-sea mining and strengthen civil society participation in decision-making.

In parallel, RISE UP and 15 partner organizations urged the United Kingdom and Ireland to uphold UNCLOS obligations, oppose rushed regulations, and ensure that ISA processes align with international environmental commitments.

At the ISA Assembly, Deep Currents Collective led the Our Collective Seabed side event, in partnership with RISE UP—convening artists, researchers and advocates to champion equitable, non-extractive approaches to ocean governance. This collective effort was reinforced through joint advocacy, including The Deep Reckoning statement, co-signed by 40 members.



When Panama officially endorsed the moratorium on deep-sea mining in 2022, it established a clear diplomatic position: protection of the marine environment must precede exploitation.

Luisa Araúz
Panama's Legal Advisor to the Minister of Environment during RISE UP's deep debate Webinar.



Marine Conservation Pakistan participating in a local event for the Day for the Deep.



+350
participants
engaged on the
deep debate



40
signatories to the
The Deep Reckoning
statement

Advancing the BBNJ Agreement

The Challenge

Turning the BBNJ (High Seas Treaty) into action requires aligning countries with different capacities, strengthening science and monitoring, and ensuring inclusive participation. Without this, growing threats like overfishing and deep-sea mining will continue to put ocean ecosystems and livelihoods at risk.

Our Approach

RISE UP works with partners in priority countries to coordinate action, amplify local voices, and support strategic advocacy. By linking frontline knowledge with global decision-making, it drives more inclusive and effective implementation of the treaty.

RISE UP Activities Advancing High Seas Treaty (BBNJ)

- In April 2025, we co-hosted the “Together for the Ocean” booth at the Our Ocean Conference in Busan, Korea, showcasing the 30x30 initiative and the High Seas Treaty.
- Dr. Sivaja Nair, RISE UP Programme Manager, co-authored a blog on the Ocean Protection Gap report powered by Together for the Ocean with Pauli Merriman (ocean policy expert at WWF), contributing to global discussions on ocean conservation.
- In October 2025, RISE UP participated in the High Seas Alliance (HSA) planning meeting in Bangkok to advance strategic planning and collaboration.
- Further amplifying our engagement, RISE UP, represented by Sivaja Nair, spoke at the IUCN–University of Nairobi webinar “BBNJ Agreement and the Ocean–Biodiversity–Climate Nexus” on 5 November 2025, highlighting African leadership and community-led approaches to ocean stewardship.

”

Inclusive

Indigenous Peoples and local communities, who have stewarded marine ecosystems since time immemorial, must be at the heart of decisionmaking processes with free, prior and informed consent, and share equitably in the benefits of ocean conservation and exploration

Excerpt from the Ocean Protection Gap report powered by Together for the Ocean





- In 2025, RISE UP became an official Friends of the High Seas Alliance (HSA) Coalition Partner, strengthening advocacy and communications coordination.
- We supported engagement by The Wildlife Trusts with the UK government, contributing to the successful progression of the UK's BBNJ Bill through Parliament, culminating in Royal Assent in February 2026.
- RISE UP also joined the steering group of the Together for the Ocean 30x30 Campaign, aligning its members with global 30x30 and BBNJ efforts, and actively contributed to the IUCN OECM Working Group, advocating for the inclusion of community-led management approaches within the 30x30 framework.



NEXT GENERATION
Ocean Basecamp

UNOC3 Highlight



The Third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3)

The third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3), co-chaired by the governments of France and Costa Rica, was held in Nice, France, from June 9–13, 2025. Under the theme “Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean,” UNOC3 built on the foundations laid by the previous conferences in New York (2017) and Lisbon (2022).

The conference brought together over 60 heads of state and governments, making it one of the largest and most significant global gatherings on ocean governance to date.

RISE UP brought the power of civil society, Indigenous Peoples, small-scale fishers and ocean defenders to the global stage, amplifying calls for a just, inclusive and rights-based ocean agenda.



Network Mobilization

+280

member WhatsApp
coordination group

+70

members participating in pre-
UNOC3 coordination calls

1

UNOC3 Toolkit
distributed



Community Representation

89

community-led organizations from
28 countries co-developed the
civil society policy statement

8

Leaders from the Global Majority
fully supported to participate with
funding and Blue Zone access and
speaking slots.



Blue Hour Networking Drinks

The RISE UP Blue Hour Drinks gathered over 100 attendees, fostering collaboration among ocean advocates. Samoan climate advocate Brianna Fruean shared reflections on her connection to the ocean from a Pacific perspective.

Ocean Basecamp: A Platform for Civil Society at UNOC3

As a co-host of the Ocean Basecamp, alongside the Oceano Azul Foundation, Fauna & Flora, Seas At Risk, Surfrider Europe and Ocean & Climate Platform, RISE UP helped create a central hub for civil society engagement during UNOC3. The space hosted over 50 events and over 4,000 participants, providing opportunities for grassroots organizations, NGOs, and policymakers to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas.

Through the “Diving into UNOC3” initiative, RISE UP, in partnership with Fauna & Flora and the Oceano Azul Foundation, supported 89 community-led organizations from 28 countries, both online and in person. Participants co-developed and delivered a collective policy statement advocating for equitable ocean governance and stronger recognition of community rights. These preparatory sessions, held in the months leading up to UNOC3, helped amplify community voices within global ocean policy discussions.

Events

5

official side events

1

flagship “*People of the Ocean*” event on World Ocean Day

2

film screenings

+12

speaking slots

Ocean Basecamp

4.000

participants

+50

events

35

participants at the RISE UP working Session

Communications

#1

RISE UP’s UNOC3 webpage ranked first on Google for “UNOC3” in the lead-up to June 10



Uncle Sol at the People of the Ocean event. Photo by Julie Rebaudo

People of the Ocean – World Ocean Day

On World Ocean Day, the People of the Ocean gathering united Indigenous leaders, small-scale fishers, and community champions to highlight frontline ocean stewardship. Marked by the launch of Te Reo o Te Moana, the One Oceania initiative, and global calls from fishers, the event reinforced a clear message: ocean conservation must center the communities who have protected it for generations. Co-organized by Pew, Nia Tero, the Great Blue Wall, IUCN, RISE UP, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and ICSF.



Blue March: Building Unity for Ocean Action

2,000+ participants, including many RISE UP network members, mobilized in a powerful public demonstration for ocean protection in Nice. The march brought together a diverse coalition of civil society, notably uniting small-scale fishers and conservation NGOs, an important shift from UNOC2, symbolizing growing trust and alignment across movements. The strong turnout amplified calls for a just, inclusive and rights-based ocean agenda.

” Diving Into UNOC3 has been a wonderful platform to raise the voices of civil society and ensure ocean policies reflect the realities and aspirations of coastal communities survival, identity and livelihoods.

Divon Mwamba

Programme officer at SWIOTUNA

” RISE UP continues to grow as an inclusive platform supporting small scale fishers’ mobilization and actions and amplifying our voices. Thank you.

Nana Kweigyah

Head, Canoe and Fishing Gear Owners Association, Ghana



KNTI team and RISE UP's Executive Director Flora McMorrin



Shaping RISE UP’s Strategic Direction for 2026 and Beyond

RISE UP convened a two-day in-person planning meeting in Lisbon, bringing together founding organizations, Advisory Group members and key partners to align on the network’s strategic direction. The session provided an opportunity to reflect on progress, strengthen coordination and assess RISE UP’s current position in the post-UN Ocean Conference context. Through collaborative discussions and co-creation sessions, participants identified key opportunities for impact and agreed on clear priorities and next steps, resulting in a shared roadmap to guide RISE UP’s work in 2026 and beyond.

- ” RISE UP unique role lies in bridging local perspectives with international action for lasting ocean conservation impact.
- ” The unique potential power of RISE UP to inform, convene, build capacity and connect local community groups across global ocean topics.

Learnings

Members bring a wide range of priorities and needs, and a key part of our role has been supporting them to identify the overlaps where collective advocacy becomes most powerful, work we will continue to build on into 2026. Our work with the Ocean and Climate cluster highlighted the importance of finding shared ground within a broad and diverse network.

We also deepened our understanding of how country context shapes what advocacy is possible. Public statements, signed letters and behind-the-scenes engagement all have a role to play, but they don't all work in every context, or at the same time. This reinforced the importance of tailored support - walking alongside groups to explore the right approach, at the right moment, rather than applying a single model across the network.

The RISE UP secretariat team

Khadija, Cheila, Natalie, Flora and Sivaja



Acknowledgements

With thanks to our funding partners for their continued support:

Funders:



Fiscal Hosts



