



2021
2030 United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development



ECOP
Early Career
Ocean Professionals

ECOP Programme Onboarding Handbook



for Coordinators and Focal Points

Released November 2023

Thanks go to all our partners for all their support in 2022-2023, especially our funding partners:



unesco

Intergovernmental
Oceanographic
Commission



Norad

Intergovernmental
Oceanographic
Commission



www.ecopdecade.org

COMPILED BY
REGIONAL COORDINATOR
RAPHAËL ROMAN
GLOBAL COORDINATOR
EVGENIIA KOSTIANAIA

Table of Contents

[List of Acronyms](#)

[I. Introduction](#)

[II. Background](#)

[III. UN Ocean Decade Actions - Terminology](#)

[IV. Advice on How to Successfully Launch and Develop a National ECOP Node](#)

1. Build a core national team
2. Co-design a national strategy with concrete action items
3. Your dedicated webpage on the ECOP Programme website
4. Find and leverage the best communication platform(s)
5. Keep track of your national ECOP members
6. Build cross-sectoral bridges and develop relationships with national and local partners
7. Solicit funding and/or in-kind support
8. Design and distribute a national ECOP survey
9. Publication of a succinct national report
10. Take a look at what other national ECOP nodes are doing
11. Global ECOP Programme team contact details

[V. Available resources and support from the core ECOP Programme team](#)

1. ECOP Programme website
2. Social media channels
3. Ocean Decade Network
4. Social media campaigns
5. Monthly ECOP newsletter
6. Global network of partners
7. ECOP webinar series
8. Global ECOP Registry
9. ECOP Programme institutional email (@ecopdecade.org)

[VI. Branding guidelines](#)

1. Proper usage of the ECOP Programme logo
2. Proper usage of the UN Ocean Decade logo
3. Notes about the IOC-UNESCO logo

[VII. Code of Conduct and Expectations from Coordinators and Focal Points](#)

1. Code of conduct
2. How to properly introduce and refer to your national node
3. Annual Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) form and progress report

[VIII. Materials Available to ECOP Coordinators and Focal Points \(upon request\)](#)

List of Acronyms

CFDA	Call for Decade Actions
DCU	Decade Coordination Unit
DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity
ECOP	Early Career Ocean Professional
NDC	National Decade Committee
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

I. Introduction

This onboarding handbook is aimed at existing and new national and regional ECOP Programme node coordinators and focal points. Specifically, focal points refer to ECOPs who serve as points of contact for thematic priorities or co-leads and members of ECOP Programme task teams. They also include ECOPs whose role is to facilitate exchanges between the ECOP Programme and their local/national institute or organization. Importantly, individuals who have an interest in launching an ECOP programme node or thematic hub in their country/region, and are unsure about the necessary steps to take, will find this handbook beneficial.

The handbook starts with useful background information and explains some key terminologies used in the context of the “UN Ocean Decade”, including the official definition of an Early Career Ocean Professional. It then moves on to offer practical guidance on how to successfully launch, develop and manage a national node, while detailing the kind of resources and support that can be expected from the global core team of the ECOP Programme. The final sections of this handbook focus on branding best practices (i.e, proper usage of logos) and expected code of conduct. As a living document, we will revise it frequently to integrate feedback, updates, and new ideas from our ever-expanding global community.

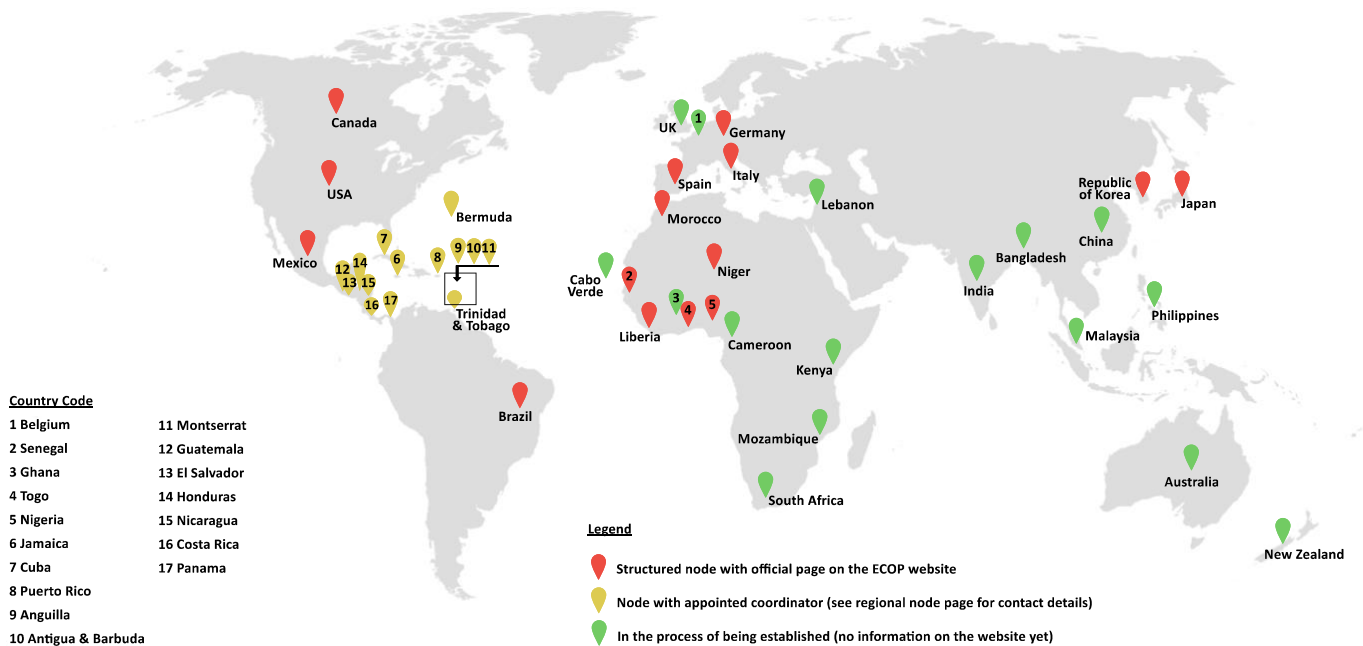
II. Background

The [Early Career Ocean Professionals Programme](#) (ECOP programme) was endorsed as a **global network Programme** of the [United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development \(2021-2030\)](#) (herein referred to as the “**UN Ocean Decade**”) in June 2021. Since then, it has been supporting ECOPs around the world by providing meaningful funding, training, networking and career development opportunities, and by creating capacity for cooperation and knowledge exchange.

The **officially adopted definition of an ECOP** is as follows:

An ECOP is a person that self-identifies as being early in their career, within 10 years or less of professional experience in any field related to the ocean. This definition includes post-secondary students and any volunteer roles, so not only employed/paid positions. The term ‘professional’ is used in order to be inclusive of professionals from various sectors of society.

Since June 2021, our global membership has expanded significantly, **including more than 4,000 ECOPs coming from 162 different countries**. We currently have **5 regional and 45 national nodes** established or in the making (see map below for a global distribution of national ECOP nodes and their status). We aspire for such nodes to be self-sustaining throughout the UN Ocean Decade and beyond. As such, the most active nodes will become a living legacy of the ECOP Programme after 2030, by continuing to amplify the voices of the next generation of ocean leaders and by facilitating knowledge exchange, mentoring, training, leadership, intergenerational support, and meaningful representation and participation in high-level dialogues, among other things.



Global Distribution of National ECOP Nodes (as of December 2023)

You can find more information about our regional and national ECOP nodes [here](#), which **remain an integral part of the ECOP Programme**. In addition, we have 4 [task teams](#) working on thematic areas, namely: (1) Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity (DEI), (2) OceanBRIDGES (bridging expertise between ECOPs and experienced ocean professionals), (3) Ocean Literacy, and (4) Training and Mentoring.

III. UN Ocean Decade Actions - Terminology

UN Ocean Decade Actions are “tangible initiatives and endeavors that will be implemented by a wide range of Decade stakeholders to fulfill” the various Objectives and achieve the 10 Challenges¹ of the UN Ocean Decade. Specifically, UN Ocean “Decade Actions include endorsed Programmes and Projects, as well as Activities and Contributions”. A comprehensive description for each type of Action is provided below, alongside important details on the endorsement process:

Programmes: Large-scale initiatives implemented at the global or regional scale and which contribute to the achievement of one or more of the UN Ocean Decade Challenges². They will be long-term, multi-year, and typically interdisciplinary and multi-national. They should consist of component Projects, which may or may not be fully or partially defined at the time of endorsement.

Projects: Discrete and focused undertakings, which will typically be hosted under the umbrella of an endorsed Programme and contribute to its overall mission (see the current list of all endorsed Projects under the ECOP Programme [here](#)). Projects can be regional, national or subnational in scale.

Activities: One-off standalone initiatives, including workshops, training, conferences, hackathons, exhibitions, publications, awareness-raising events or any other products specially developed for the UN Ocean Decade.

Contributions: Support either the implementation of an endorsed UN Ocean Decade Action (e.g., Programme, Project or Activity) or the coordination costs of the UN Ocean Decade. Resources provided can be in-kind and/or financial.

Call for Decade Actions (CFDAs): Programmes and Projects are solicited through regular Calls for Decade Actions every 6 months throughout the UN Ocean Decade. The very [first CFDA](#) was unveiled by the IOC-UNESCO in the Fall of 2020, and the current one - [No. 06/2023](#) - was launched on **15 October 2023**, with the aim of **filling gaps in knowledge and capacity development for Africa and Caribbean SIDS**. More details on the 6th CFDA are available [here](#), while we recommend visiting [this page](#) for general guidelines about the endorsement process for all Action types.

¹ Additional information about the UN Ocean Decade can be consulted in the [UN Ocean Decade Implementation Plan](#) or its [summary version](#) (available in several languages).

² The ECOP Programme is officially addressing five of the ten UN Ocean Decade challenges, with special importance given to Challenges 9 and 10. See the official list below:

Challenge #2: Protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity,
Challenge #3: Sustainably feed the global population,
Challenge #4: Develop a sustainable and equitable ocean economy,
Challenge #9: Skills, knowledge and technology for all,
Challenge #10: Change humanity’s relationship with the ocean,

IV. Advice on How to Successfully Launch and Develop a National ECOP Node

1. Build a core national team

- **Find key members** who are willing to collectively coordinate and steer the development of the ECOP node. Ideally, a coordinating team should work to facilitate a “distributed” structure, whereby each member can meaningfully contribute to the efforts of the national node. This is particularly important to keep in mind in the initial absence of funding.
 - i. You can establish a **national coordination team** and/or **Steering Committee**. Core members can have different functions and responsibilities depending on their interests and capacity,
 - ii. It is also possible to appoint one national coordinator, but in that scenario, we recommend having at least a Steering Committee to help guide and advise the work of the coordinator, or recruiting one or more complementary team member(s),
 - iii. **If you are starting alone** and struggling to find other active and motivated peers in your country, try reaching out to your National Decade Committee (NDC) if it has already been established (see [here](#)), existing early career networks or simply contact your regional ECOP coordinator (see [subsection IV.11.](#)), who can put you in touch with relevant members and partners. Importantly, they can **send you a list of existing ECOP members in your country**, which is extracted directly from our global registry (learn more about the registry in [subsection V.8.](#)).
- You could potentially appoint an **Advisory Committee** composed of representatives from key ocean institutions and stakeholder groups in the country (members can be from any career stage and ocean sector). Such a committee can help provide vision, expertise, networks, as well as in-kind and/or financial support.
- Another idea worth considering is the establishment of **thematic task teams** or **subgroups** (e.g., Ocean Literacy, Communication/Outreach, Training and Mentoring, etc.). You can also **recruit and select focal points** as representatives of particular sub-regions, states/provinces or key national institutions and UN Ocean Decade Coordinating bodies (thus working as liaison agents).
- We also recommend the engagement of both **producers and users of ocean knowledge** in your coordination team or at least in your national ECOP community.

2. **Co-design a national strategy with concrete action items**, such as projects you would like to pursue in the short-term, as well as longer-term initiatives. Terms of Reference (ToR) are also welcomed. Find inspiration from other nodes on our [website](#), and below is a non-exhaustive list of tangible examples from our global ECOP network:
- **Video interviews** - *India* ([link](#)) and *Japan* (see **playlist** [here](#)),
 - **Ocean Literacy** workshops and outreach in schools - *India* (see webinar [here](#)),
 - **ECOP side events, sessions, workshops or networking corners** during academic conferences and other ocean events and high-level dialogues:
 - i. *China* ([Fourth Microplastic Conference in Shanghai](#), [DITTO Summit](#)),
 - ii. *India* ([OSICON-2023](#)),
 - iii. *Malaysia* ([WCMB](#)),
 - iv. *South Korea* ([Spring meeting of the Korean Society of Oceanography](#)),
 - v. *Africa* ([WAMSS-2023](#)),
 - A **national kick-off and get-together symposium** co-organized for and by ECOPs, to introduce the national node, set strategies, raise awareness of the UN Ocean Decade and facilitate cross-pollination between sectors and disciplines. They can provide an excellent opportunity to invite ECOP and non-ECOP speakers from different walks of life, and focal points from UN Ocean Decade Actions. Such a symposium or conference **can be planned together with your [National Decade Committee](#)**, which is also encouraged to launch a kick-off event as part of its national engagement strategy - *Japan* ([link](#)),
 - **Regular webinars** - *Africa* ([link](#)) and *Central America* ([link](#)),
 - **Training** in collaboration with partners such as the [OceanTeacher Global Academy \(OTGA\)](#) - 2 courses for ECOPs in *Africa* (see [here](#) and [here](#)), one for *Asia* ([link](#)); further courses for *Central America* and *China* are in the making,
 - **ECOP needs-assessment surveys** (available in multiple languages) - *Africa, Asia, Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region, Canada, China, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea* and *Spain* (**Survey templates are available upon request**).
3. **A dedicated webpage** should be set up on the ECOP Programme website to officialise your node (see examples [here](#)). A standardized but not prescriptive **content template is available upon request**,
- The launch of your webpage should be planned alongside your regional coordinator (or Global coordinator if no one has yet been assigned to your region) and the ECOP communications team (you can find their contact information in [subsection IV.11.](#)),
 - Once you finalize the content and receive the green light from the regional (or global) coordinator, the communications team will take care of the layout and structure of your webpage and accommodate requests as best as possible,
 - This is intended to be a living and customizable webpage. As such, for any future updates and edits, please contact the communications team, who will address your queries accordingly.

4. Find and leverage the best **communication platform(s)** to start fostering connections and organic networking among ECOPs in your country, while efficiently distributing ocean-related information and opportunities,
 - Slack and WhatsApp are the most popular choices among existing nodes, while group emails, social media accounts (e.g., Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter) and regular newsletters are used as alternatives or complementary engagement mechanisms,
 - Another option that both the Brazilian and Indian nodes have been exploring is the creation of a private ECOP group on the [Ocean Decade Network](#), an online interactive platform commonly referred to as the ‘*LinkedIn for the global ocean community*’. If you haven’t created a profile on ODN yet, we highly encourage you to do so.

5. We recommend keeping **track of your national ECOP members** by storing their contact details (e.g., name, email, country/nationality, affiliation, expertise, etc.) into a **national spreadsheet**. Options to create an **outward-facing registry** on our website can also be explored.
 - To assist you in starting a national dataset and reaching out to prospective ECOP members in your country, the ECOP Programme team **can send you a customized spreadsheet extracted directly from our “Global ECOP registry”** (see [subsection V.8.](#)), which will contain all existing information about registered ECOPs in your country,
 - Your team will be responsible for regularly curating this national dataset and updating the regional (or Global) coordinator with your latest membership details (**at least 2-3 times a year**). The core ECOP Programme team will then integrate this information back into the Global ECOP Registry, thus keeping global membership data up to date,
 - We also strongly recommend national coordinators to ask their members to **subscribe to the [monthly ECOP newsletter](#)**. Upon filling out the subscription form, they will be asked whether or not they want their personal information to be added to our Global Registry,
 - Make sure to **respect the confidentiality of your members** by keeping their contact records safe and secure, restricting access to only a few people within the core national team. You can find the ECOP Programme’s [data privacy policy here](#).

6. **Build cross-sectoral bridges and develop relationships** with national and local partners, such as National Decade Committees (NDCs)³, IOC focal points⁴, indigenous communities, and endorsed UN Ocean Decade Actions (e.g., Programmes, Projects and Contributions). The ECOP Programme can assist you in the process by **plugging you into our global “Network of Networks”**.

³ Find whether your country has a National Decade Committee at [this link](#). As of October 9, 2023, a total of 37 countries have officially established one.

⁴ You can consult [this document](#) for more information about national liaison bodies and designated focal points in IOC Member States.

7. **Solicit funding and/or in-kind support** for dedicated coordinator(s) for your node,
 - There are existing in-kind support structures that **dedicate a certain percentage of their time and resources to national ECOP activities**, with examples in *Canada* (where the [Decade Collaborative Center for the Northeast Pacific](#) provides vital assistance with grant disbursement and other administrative duties) and in the *USA* (through the [NOAA Knauss fellowship Program](#), where one of the paid fellow contributes 25% of their work towards the coordination of the national node),
 - We encourage you to reach out to your National Decade Committee, IOC focal point or any other Decade coordinating bodies and key ocean stakeholders in your country, in order to **jointly explore opportunities and future pathways for in-kind and/or financial support**. To date, only [ECOP Canada](#) has successfully attracted funds for a full-time national coordinator (see [here for more details](#)),
 - You can request a **template email** with a **slide deck** outlining the latest developments of the ECOP Programme, to reach out to potential funders (see [section VIII](#)).

8. **Design and distribute a (bilingual) national ECOP survey** to gain insights into the diverse needs, priorities, and challenges of ECOPs in your country,
 - Needs-assessment **survey templates are available upon request**. These templates are optional and there are no restrictions regarding how the survey is designed and structured, and what survey platform is used,
 - Prior to releasing and propagating your national ECOP survey, **please make sure to confirm its content with either your regional coordinator or the Global coordinator**. They will grant you authorization to proceed,
 - Disseminating a national survey can also help you recruit additional core team members, find local ECOP leaders or champions, and expand your national ECOP community or network.

9. While optional, we are prepared to provide support and assistance for the creation and publication of a **succinct national report** (see previous examples [here](#)). This report would be informed by your survey findings. The ECOP communications team will incorporate a report template and collaborate with you to finalize the design accordingly.

10. **Take a look at what other national ECOP nodes have been doing** and feel free to contact their coordinator(s) or focal point(s) to exchange ideas, ask for advice or simply get to know each other better. We strongly encourage organic networking of national nodes within and between regions. Keep in mind that many governance structures exist. You do not have to stick to any one of them and are **free to develop and adopt the model or strategy that best suits your national context and community needs**.

11. If you have any questions or need further clarifications, please reach out to your regional node coordinator (see contact details below) or the Global ECOP Programme coordinator if your region is not listed:

- **Global:** Evgeniia Kostianaia, e.kostianaia@unesco.org
- **Africa:** Anthony Ndah, a.ndah@ecopdecade.org
- **Asia:** Raphael Roman, rk.roman@unesco.org:
- **Caribbean:** Dayne Buddo, caribbean@ecopdecade.org
- **Central America:** Xochitl Édua Elías Ilosvay, central_america@ecopdecade.org

You can also contact our communications coordinator and task team leads:

- **Communications:** natalie@ecopdecade.org,
- **Training & Mentoring:** training.mentoring@ecopdecade.org,
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity (DEI):** dei@ecopdecade.org,
- **Ocean Literacy:** ocean.literacy@ecopdecade.org,
- **OceanBridges:** ocean.bridges@ecopdecade.org

V. Available resources and support from the core ECOP Programme team

1. Our flagship [ECOP Programme website](#) was launched in December 2021. It's important to mention that the site **offers translations into various languages**, accessible by clicking the small flag icon at the bottom right of the screen. These languages include Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Please be aware that these translations were automatically generated and not produced by the ECOP Programme team. As a consequence, there might be variations in quality and potential inconsistencies.
2. The ECOP Programme has a strong presence on **social media**. You can find us on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and we also have a [YouTube channel](#). Make sure to take full advantage of these various platforms and associated tools to support your node and amplify your work, such as sharing domestic opportunities, news, events and ocean-related activities or initiatives, among other things,
 - **The ECOP communications team will be the main point of contact** for any requests pertaining to social media outreach and promotional materials. The regional coordinators can also be contacted directly for such inquiries. They will then correspond and coordinate with the communications team accordingly,
 - To streamline our social media efforts and facilitate seamless content sharing, we **kindly request that you prepare draft promotional text or descriptions to accompany the content you wish to advertise or share** (regardless of the format, e.g., videos, articles/blogs/stories, posters, job opportunities and any other announcements). This proactive approach will greatly assist our communications team in efficiently posting your content across ECOP's social media platforms,

- Please refer to our **Branding Guidelines** ([Section VI](#)) to learn more about the proper usage of the ECOP logo for outreach and promotional purposes, especially if you intend to use communication channels and platforms that are outside of the ECOP Programme.
3. **Public group for ECOPs on the [Ocean Decade Network \(ODN\)](#):** This open group welcomes ECOPs, partners, supporters and any other interested parties with an account on the ODN. **It comprises more than 1,500 members** and provides a virtual collaborative space and a global platform to share ideas, opportunities, achievements and news, or to ask for help and advice, among other things. If you haven't done so already, we strongly encourage you and your ECOP members to register on the ODN and create your own profile. You can do so [here](#).
 - Once you create a profile on the ODN, go to the "Groups" section on the upper tab and **search for "Open Groups"**. You should then be able to see around a dozen of public and private open groups, of which one is called "Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs)". Finally, simply click on "*Join Group*" to access its content, network with our community members, post opportunities and receive future notifications,
 - If you wish, you **can request to be added to the list of ECOP contacts for your national node** (right side of the page). This will enable other ECOP members to know your status and potentially contact you directly via ODN's messaging service. In order to be listed as a key point of contact in the ECOP open group, please send a direct message to the Global coordinator via ODN's messaging service,
 - You are free to join any other cross-cutting, thematic or region-specific groups available on the ODN, including working groups, communities of practice (CoPs) and open groups like the ECOP one,
 - As indicated earlier, some national nodes (e.g., *Brazil* and *India*) have decided to **establish their own private group on the ODN**. This is optional, but If you wish to follow suit, please fill out the form [here](#).
 - Once you are approved as a member of the ODN, we also **recommend visiting the "Directory"** (see upper tab) and exploring the interactive map to see who is located in your country, region, city or locality.
 4. Coordinators and focal points are highly encouraged to participate in our [ECOP Stories](#), [ECOP Conversations](#), [global video series](#) exploring ECOP nodes, and other [social media campaigns](#). You would also be expected to share these opportunities with your national ECOP network and invite any members to take part in it. Anyone interested shall contact our communications coordinator at: natalie@ecopdecade.org.
 5. **Monthly ECOP Newsletter:** Since early 2022, our ECOP Programme team has been releasing a global monthly newsletter, which we encourage you to subscribe to [at this link](#). Please make sure to share this subscription form widely within your national ECOP community. **More than 4,000 ECOPs are currently subscribed to our newsletter**, which contains ECOP-related news, stories from the field, jobs, events and a diversity of other opportunities in the ocean space.

- The ECOP newsletter serves as an excellent platform for enhancing your node’s visibility and showcasing the work and contributions of your members,
 - Prior to the release of each newsletter (**1-2 weeks before**), our ECOP communications team will reach out to national coordinators and focal points, extending an invitation to share and contribute any pertinent and timely updates, opportunities, stories and events that they believe should be featured in the newsletter.
6. You will have access to our **global network of partners** (see official list [here](#)) and can request connections by reaching out to either your regional coordinator or the Global coordinator. In addition to those mentioned on the website, there are other collaborators that deserve to be highlighted, including but not limited to:
- [OceanTeacher Global Academy \(OTGA\)](#) for trainings and courses,
 - 2022 courses: “Ocean Colour Remote Sensing and Data Analysis for African ECOPs” [\[link\]](#)
 - 2023 courses: “Ocean Data Analysis with R Programming for ECOPs” in Africa [\[link\]](#) and Asia [\[link\]](#)
 - [Ocean Policy Research Institute \(OPRI\)](#) of The Sasakawa Peace Foundation,
 - [Sustainable Ocean Alliance \(SOA\)](#),
 - Some of our regional and national node coordinators are in regular contact with their SOA counterparts (e.g., *Africa, Asia, Canada* and *Central America*). These collaborations have led to the co-design of activities at the national and regional level and helped some of our coordinators recruit new members.
 - [Early Career Scientist Network of the International Indian Ocean Expedition](#)
7. **ECOP webinar series:** This initiative has been running successfully since September 2022. All episodes are usually recorded and made readily available on both our [website](#) and [YouTube](#). The ECOP Programme has a **paid Zoom account** that allows scheduling of large meetings and webinars to up to 500 attendees,
- National coordinators are welcome and encouraged to propose new topics and ideas for future ECOP webinars. If interested to host or coordinate a future webinar, make sure to reach out to our training and mentoring task team at webinars@ecopdecade.org and request the “ECOP Webinar Form”. You will need to fill out this form as part of the planning process,
 - You can also use the ECOP Programme Zoom account to host your own national webinar series in any languages you desire (e.g., see the [Central America seminar series](#) held in Spanish), provided that the time and day you selected have not been reserved by others. Make sure to double check with the training and mentoring task team before finalizing a date for a webinar or large meeting.

8. **Global ECOP Registry:** As of December 2023, our global ECOP database (or registry) comprises **more than 4,000 ECOPs from 162 countries**. It contains 15 different variables or features about our members, including key information such as:
- Full Name,
 - Email(s),
 - Country(-ies) of residence and/or origin,
 - Regional node(s),
 - If available, details about their affiliation(s), expertise, sector(s), etc.,
 - Whether or not they subscribed to our [monthly newsletter](#),
 - Whether or not they are part of any ECOP Programme task team,
 - Whether or not they are an NDC representative from their country,
 - Whether or not they are a UN Ocean Decade Action focal point - either for an endorsed Programme or Contribution (see [section III](#)).

Access to the global ECOP registry is strictly limited to the core ECOP Programme team. Any queries, such as requesting a list of existing ECOP members in your country, need to be directed to either your regional coordinator or the Global coordinator. As already explained in [subsection IV.5](#), a national dataset can be extracted and shared with you upon request, which will be instrumental in helping you connect with other ECOP members in your country and finding important allies at the start of your journey.

Beyond its basic function as a repository, the global ECOP registry provides key data and statistics that are regularly updated and synthesized into **fact sheets and other communication materials** (without publicizing any personal or confidential information in the process). Once per year, these data also help us **fill out the monitoring and evaluation form** that the Decade Coordination Unit requests from all UN Ocean Decade Programmes and Projects. Finally, since we often receive inquiries seeking ECOP speakers, facilitators or volunteers for specific events, sessions, activities or working groups, the global registry offers a seamless “filtering and searching” mechanism. This enables us to efficiently identify ideal candidates for these positions.

9. **ECOP Programme institutional email:** As an ECOP Programme coordinator or focal point, you can get a free institutional email **with the domain @ecopdecade.org**, displaying the name of your country, region, or task team. If you need one, please write an email to the Global Coordinator Evgeniia Kostianaia at: e.kostianaia@unesco.org. It is your responsibility to regularly check your correspondence if you decide to opt for this institutional email.

VI. Branding guidelines

1. Proper usage of the **ECOP Programme logo**

- a. Coordinators and focal points are welcomed to use the ECOP Programme logo in their communication materials, such as presentation slides, flyers, pamphlets, videos, pictures, banners, reports, provided that their position has been confirmed by the regional and/or Global coordinator.
- b. The ECOP Programme logo cannot be used to promote your own brand, services or products or to support activities not related to the work of the ECOP Programme. If in doubt, please consult the Global coordinator.
 - i. There are no official or formal forms to fill out when requesting permission to use the ECOP Programme logo. A simple email sent to the Global coordinator (or regional coordinator if relevant) will suffice. However, you will need to wait for confirmation from the Global or regional coordinator prior to publicizing the ECOP Programme logo. **This is required from all new coordinators and focal points** (i.e., in their current position for less than 3 months, with their profile visible on the ECOP website) and for those who are planning to use the ECOP Programme logo for the first time.
- c. If the above rules have been continuously violated, the position of a coordinator or focal point can be revoked.

2. Proper usage of the **UN Ocean Decade logo**

- a. **Only officially endorsed UN Ocean Decade Actions** (inclusive of Activities) are allowed to use the UN Ocean Decade logo, which includes the ECOP Programme:
 - i. As such, the ECOP Programme can use the UN Ocean Decade logo in relevant materials and assets, including, but not limited to, reports and other internal publications, website, press releases, fact sheets, flyers, statements and videos.
 - ii. The UN Ocean Decade logo can **only be used to identify events and activities related to the UN Ocean Decade**. As a result, with the exception of internal meetings and online or in-person events falling directly under the purview of the ECOP Programme – which include ECOP webinars, symposia, and conference workshops or side-events – **any other local activities or projects led by national ECOP nodes and focal points will need to request use of the UN Ocean Decade logo. Doing so requires filling out the Decade Activities application form, which is available [here](#) for your perusal**. The DCU will be notified accordingly, and usage of the logo will be conditional upon their final approval. This is important for them to track the use of the logo.
 - iii. If an ECOP Programme node or focal point successfully applies for endorsement of their activity and plan on using the UN Ocean Decade logo, **they are expected to inform the Global coordinator of such plans. A post-activity follow-up** with the Communications team should also be scheduled to share and post insights, materials and deliverables on the ECOP Programme website and social media.

- iv. **For any questions pertaining to the UN Ocean Decade logo**, we encourage you to explore the official “Brand Guidelines for the Ocean Decade” [here](#) or directly contact the DCU Communications team at: oceandecade.comms@unesco.org.
 - b. Please note that you **cannot grant or authorize use of the UN Ocean Decade logo by any third party**. If a third party enters into agreement with the ECOP Programme for execution of a joint project (e.g., through an MoU; see [section VII 1](#)), then they can use the ECOP Programme logo **BUT this does not grant them permission to do the same with the UN Ocean Decade logo, unless, as previously mentioned, they fill out the Decade Activities [application form](#) and receive confirmation from the DCU.**
 - c. If the above rules have been continuously violated, the position of a coordinator or a focal point can be revoked.
- 3. Notes about the **IOC-UNESCO logo**
 - a. Emails, promotional materials, social media accounts and other forms of communication shall not include the IOC-UNESCO logo. Only hired consultants are permitted to use this logo in their email signatures and presentations, as well as showcase it on platforms like LinkedIn or other social media platforms.
 - i. The same rules apply to verbal statements that claim someone is affiliated with or employed by IOC-UNESCO or the UN.
 - b. Permission to use the ECOP and/or UN Ocean Decade logo(s) does not automatically give authorization to use the IOC-UNESCO logo.

VII. Code of Conduct and Expectations from Coordinators and Focal Points

1. Code of conduct

- a. Coordinators and focal points shall treat others, whether this happens in online or in-person meetings or written communication, with dignity and respect, regardless of race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, language, ethnicity, disability, or socioeconomic background. Any form of abuse, offense, or intimidation, whether it's verbal or written, is prohibited.
- b. As underlined in [section VI](#), coordinators and focal points are **not allowed to use the ECOP Programme and UN Ocean Decade logos for advertising and promoting their own brand, services or products** which are not related to their role within the ECOP Programme and/or the UN Ocean Decade.
- c. Coordinators and focal points should **behave in an appropriate and professional way at all times** when representing the ECOP Programme. If they are asked to give a presentation about the ECOP Programme in their country/region, it is regarded as good practice to consult with their regional coordinator or the Global coordinator to make sure the information is up-to-date, especially if they are new in their role.
 - i. If a national coordinating team plans to **submit a proposal for a side-event or special session at a high-level international conference** (such as UN Climate Change conferences or COPs, Ocean Decade conferences and other UN-sponsored events) on behalf of the ECOP Programme – listing the ECOP Programme as co-convenor or co-lead – they must get **confirmation from both the regional AND Global coordinators before submitting**,
 - ii. In the situation where signing a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** is necessary to formally establish a new partnership between a local/national organization and the ECOP Programme, the national coordinating team who oversees and facilitates the process **must contact and receive full consent from the Global Coordinator of the ECOP Programme**. Despite the fact that future activities, projects and initiatives highlighted in the MoU will be coordinated by the national/regional ECOP node, they cannot sign an MoU. **The responsibility for signing an MoU lies solely with the Global Coordinator.**
- d. **Coordinators and focal points are assigned and confirmed by their regional ECOP coordinator AND the Global ECOP coordinator**, with whom they are expected to maintain reasonable and consistent communication (if needed, an official invitation letter can be drafted, see [section VIII](#)). In the case of prolonged silence (e.g., exceeding 3 months) or if communication gaps and inconsistent interactions become too apparent and clearly hamper progress, the core ECOP Programme team reserves the right to seek and appoint a different person for the affected position.
- e. **Regional coordinators** are expected to maintain and nurture two-way communication channels with national coordinators and focal points in their region. Additionally, they **shall be responsible for keeping the Global ECOP coordinator up-to-date** with their progress, activities, and initiatives, ensuring cohesion and coherence at the global level.

2. **How to properly introduce and refer to your national node:** Whenever you are talking about your national ECOP node, whether verbally, in a presentation slide, blog article or on the website, you can use the shorter and more convenient form, that is: **“ECOP [country]”** (for example: “ECOP Japan”, “ECOP Nigeria”, “ECOP Brazil”, “ECOP Mexico”, etc). However, when filling out and submitting application forms, proposals or any other formal documents, the **most appropriate wording for your node can follow either of the following structures:**
 - a. “ECOP Programme [country] node”, or
 - b. “National node of the (UN Ocean Decade endorsed) ECOP Programme for [country]”
3. Starting in 2024, all ECOP nodes and task teams will be **invited to provide inputs and feedback to the annual Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)⁵ form during the period April-May**. They will also be **required to submit a concise progress report (1-3 pages) at the end of each year**. The latter shall be submitted to both the Global and regional coordinators **by December 1st**.
 - a. This procedure aims to assess how active and engaged each national and regional node is, and identify what resources are needed to support them accordingly,
 - b. Because most of the national ECOP coordinating teams work on a volunteer basis and have been in existence/operation for different periods of time, we understand that reports may vary significantly. However, with this reporting procedure, we want to make sure that our coordinators are taking the necessary steps to develop their nodes for the benefit of their fellow ECOPs.
 - c. If an ECOP node is struggling or facing significant difficulties and impediments, the ECOP Programme team (namely the assigned regional coordinator or Global coordinator) shall dedicate time to closely assist and guide the affected members. Support should continue to be diligently provided until the situation improves or is resolved.

VIII. Materials Available to ECOP Coordinators and Focal Points (upon request)

1. Needs-assessment **survey templates** from other national and regional nodes,
2. Content **template for a webpage** on the ECOP Programme website,
3. Zip file containing several **official versions of the ECOP logo** (including different colors & styles),
4. **Official invitation letter** for national coordinator(s) and other supporting roles (e.g., ocean literacy focal points). This is optional considering that we don’t need a letter to officialize ECOP positions. However, if deemed necessary due to institutional requirements or national context, the regional coordinator can use existing templates to draft invitation letters,
5. **Template email** with a **slide deck** outlining the latest developments of the ECOP Programme, to reach out to potential funders.

⁵ The Monitoring & Evaluation framework was first implemented in 2023 and aims to track impact and progress with respect to the UN Ocean Decade Outcomes and Challenges, doing so using a predefined set of quantitative indicators and qualitative metrics (learn more about the framework [here](#)). The DCU is responsible for the implementation and reporting of the M&E framework, requiring annual results from all endorsed Decade Actions and NDCs. As an endorsed Programme, **the ECOP Programme is expected to fill in a reporting form by early May, covering the period from July 1st of the previous year to June 30th of the current year.**