

# United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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Comments

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The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD

**Speech by Awni Behnam, Honorary President, International Oceans Institute**  
UN Trade Forum, 8 of May 2023

I wish to extend on behalf of the international ocean institute (IOI) to UNCTAD congratulations for producing the first special review on trade and environment (TER) 2023 for building a sustainable ocean economy. This new report must become a biannual UNCTAD flag ship report as it sets out the nexus of trade, development, the ocean and climate change. The review furthermore addresses with analysis the consequential challenges to sustainability.

I don't need to cite all its valuable and interrelated aspects of its relevance to global sustainability but assert however the trade and environment review complements the UNCTAD maritime annual reviews, which makes it an important contribution to and is a necessity only for policy makers but also to all stake holders and the general public because of its analysis, content and data it is needed beyond practitioners but all stake holders of which is the general public.

The TER 2023 it is a tool for sustainable practices and interlinkages of trade environment and ocean literacy that address these interdependent challenges identified by the review.

The Review asserts that we need to empower all stake holders particularly coastal communities in developing countries and countries in transition vulnerable countries and SIDS with the knowledge and skills to understand and manage their interdependent marine resources sustainably. It is also the only UN report that provides state-of-the-art analysis on the ocean economy and related regulatory trends in the multilateral trade system as well as in the UN system.

Its more than 40 policy-oriented recommendations need to be implemented and taken as a high impact initiative for the UN SDG Summit in September 2023. Let's recall what the UN Secretary General said that SDG14 is not a standalone development goal.

That's why we, at the IOI, recently launched the Ocean Academy as an ocean literacy initiative. By providing regionally and locally relevant, entry-level online education programmes, the IOI Ocean Academy as a knowledge-based institution will enable interested laypersons to acquire the knowledge, information, skills and knowhow needed to understand the complexities of the interacting and

interdependent relationship of ocean trade and environment and its local and global effects, now and in a changing future, laying the foundations for more informed understanding and personal daily decision-making.

We are convinced of the value-added partnership of IOI and UNCTAD in the endeavor of generating a momentum prior to forth coming international event as the UN SDG summit and the third ocean conference in Marseille in 2025.