

EVENTO PARALELO: DE GINEBRA A NIZA:  
UNA HOJA DE RUTA PARA ECONOMÍAS OCEÁNICAS SOSTENIBLES

09.06.2025 | 12:15-13:30 hrs | Sala 1, Zona Azul

PALABRAS DEL SEÑOR CANCELLER, ARNOLDO ANDRÉ TINOCO

**What are the multilateral and national implications of the existing recommendations from the UN Ocean Forum on Trade-Related Aspects of SDG 14?**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues,

First, let me express my deepest gratitude to the UN Trade and Development Organization for organizing this Panel, and for its tireless efforts in aligning economic and trade policies with the sustainable use of our ocean and its resources. Your work is essential to achieving key trade-related targets of Sustainable Development Goal 14, including promoting sustainable fishing and reducing marine pollution.

Costa Rica welcomes the Forum's work as it highlights a critical - and sometimes underappreciated - dimension of ocean governance: the intersection of trade, sustainability, and equity in the blue economy.

As a country with two coasts, a rich marine biodiversity, and a deep commitment to multilateralism, Costa Rica recognizes these recommendations not just as guidance - but as a framework for action at both the international and national levels.

First, allow me to reflect on the multilateral sphere.

These recommendations strengthen the global call for eliminating harmful fisheries subsidies, in line with WTO negotiations and the goals of SDG 14.6. In November 2024 Costa Rica ratified the Agreement before the WTO Secretariat and actively participates - alongside other Latin American countries - in discussions on overcapacity and overfishing. In these negotiations, Costa Rica has emphasized the need for the new agreement to objectively recognize the differentiated responsibility of members with higher levels of subsidies.

In parallel, the emphasis on marine traceability, certification, and market access aligns with our efforts to promote transparency and sustainability in international seafood value chains. These are key to combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and to ensuring consumers - particularly in the Global North - can make informed choices that support ocean health.

Furthermore, we also recognize that blue economy development must be inclusive and sustainable. Trade-related policies must be aligned with ocean conservation and designed to avoid externalizing environmental and social costs to the most vulnerable. This is particularly relevant to small island developing states and coastal countries like ours, where ocean resources are central to cultural identity, food security, and economic opportunity.

Costa Rica believes that trade - when governed responsibly - can be a powerful tool to mobilize investment, scale innovation, and share technology in marine sectors ranging from fisheries to

marine biotechnology. But this requires international cooperation, fair market conditions, and capacity building, especially for developing economies.

Turning to the national level, the Forum's recommendations resonate deeply with our priorities and challenges.

Costa Rica has already taken ambitious steps to protect marine ecosystems - including the expansion of marine protected areas, the advancement of marine spatial planning, and the implementation of national policies to regulate fishing and promote sustainable aquaculture. But the trade lens brings a new layer of complexity - and opportunity.

We also recognize the importance of developing a national blue economy strategy that integrates trade, conservation, and livelihoods. This pushes us to strengthen marine value chains, encourage local processing, invest in eco-certification, and open new markets for sustainable marine products, especially those that reflect Costa Rica's biodiversity and ethical values.

At the same time, we must address data gaps and capacity challenges. Effective traceability systems, sustainability certifications, and compliance with international market standards require investments in science, technology, and institutional coordination. This is an area where multilateral support - through finance and technical assistance - will be critical.

Additionally, we are exploring the potential of marine biotechnology and marine ecotourism - sectors that can offer value-added economic opportunities with a low environmental footprint.

These efforts must be socially inclusive. We must place emphasis on protecting coastal communities, mainstreaming gender equality, and ensuring that small-scale producers are not left behind in the shift to a greener, bluer economy. These are not just safeguards - they are prerequisites for long-term resilience and public trust.

Costa Rica has integrated these principles into its ocean governance model and will continue to center people - especially women and youth in coastal communities - in the design of marine trade and investment policies.

To conclude, Costa Rica sees the Ocean Forum's recommendations as a timely and practical roadmap to make trade a driver - not a threat - to SDG 14.

At the multilateral level, we will continue to push for strong, fair rules on fisheries subsidies, traceability, and market access that reward sustainability and equity.

At the national level, we are committed to developing a resilient, inclusive blue economy that benefits people and planet - using trade policy as a tool to support our marine conservation and development goals.

Finally, we must take concerted and targeted action. We welcome continued cooperation with partners, institutions, and coastal states who share this vision. Only by integrating trade, conservation, and social justice can we truly deliver on SDG 14 - for the ocean, for our people, and for future generations.

Thank you!