Concept Note

Fostering the participation of Landlocked Developing Countries in the Ocean Economy


Co-organized by UN-OHRLLS, Paraguay (Chair of the LLDCs), and DOALOS

Monday, 17 June 2019, 13:15hrs – 14:30hrs

Venue: Conference Room 11

1. Introduction

The ocean has a significant part to play in the worldwide development, and it can help fight poverty. According to the Word Bank (2016), oceans drive economic activity, responsible for eighty percent of global trade and thirty-two percent of hydrocarbons extracted for energy needs and the contribution of the ocean economy to global value added is estimated conservatively in the order of US$1.5 trillion annually, or roughly 3 percent of global value added. Despite the opportunities offered by the ocean economy, participation in the ocean economy is not inclusive. The landlocked developing countries are among those marginalised from the ocean economy partly due to lack of access.

While landlocked countries don’t have direct access to the sea because of their geographical location, Part X of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) gives these countries the right of access to and from the sea and freedom of transit. In addition, UNCLOS establishes that “[l]and-locked States have the right to participate, on an equitable basis, in the exploitation of an appropriate part of the surplus of the living resources of the exclusive economic zones of coastal States of the same sub-region or region.”

The side-event will address these rights and other benefits that landlocked countries could derive from becoming parties to the Convention, including in fields like the exploration and exploitation of resources, marine scientific research, and the laying of submarine cables and pipelines.
Out of the 44 landlocked States 28 have ratified or acceded to UNCLOS of which 20\(^1\) are LLDCs. Twelve LLDCs have not yet ratified UNCLOS. The participation of LLDCs, in meetings and processes related to ocean affairs and the law of the sea has also been quite limited.

2. **Objectives of the event**

In response to the call made during the side event *Enhancing the participation of the Landlocked States in the implementation of SDG 14* held in 2017, the upcoming side event is organised to continue to sensitize and build the capacity of the LLDCs to participate in the blue economy.

3. **Expected Outcome**

i. Increased awareness about UNCLOS and its implementing agreements particularly on the rights, benefits and obligations of the LLDCs;

ii. Identification of opportunities for technical assistance and capacity building;

iii. Recommendations on how the participation of the LLDCs in the blue economy can be enhanced.

4. **Format of the event**

The event will feature panel presentations by panelists representing different stakeholders including representatives from the United Nations, the International Seabed Authority, other international organizations and Members States. The panel presentations will be followed by an interactive dialogue with members of the audience.

5. **Co-organizers**

The event is organized by UN-OHRLLS, Paraguay (Chair of the LLDCs), and Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS).

6. **Participants**

The event will bring together delegates from all Members States including Landlocked developing Countries, United Nations organizations, the private sector and civil society.

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7. **Date and Venue**

The side event will be held on the 17 June 2019 at 13:15hrs to 14:30hrs in the margins of twenty-ninth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and will be held in Conference Room 11 at the UN Headquarters in New York.

8. **Background Documents**

   ii. Vienna Programme of Action