



Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

Home > IOC In Focus > Monaco Declaration and Research Priorities Report

Search... Advanced

Released

- IOC Home
- IOC In Focus
- IOC News
- IOC Photo Library
- Contact IOC

Themes

Worldwide

- IOC Regional Sub-Commissions
- IOC Regional Committees
- IOC Regional Programme Offices
- IOC Project Offices
- GOOS Regional Alliances
- Data Networks

Programmes

- Capacity Development
- GOOS
- IODE
- JCOMM
- Law of Sea
- Marine Assessments
- Marine Management
- Ocean Carbon
- Tsunami
- World Climate Research Programme
- Other IOC Programmes
- IOC Programme
- Newsletters

Monaco Declaration and Research Priorities Report Released

UNESCO Press Release No.2009-08

Leading scientists from all over the world call for immediate action to stop ocean acidification



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30 January, Paris - More than 150 leading marine scientists from 26 countries are calling for immediate action by policymakers to reduce CO2 emissions sharply so as to avoid widespread and severe damage to marine ecosystems from ocean acidification. They issued this warning in the Monaco Declaration, released on 30 January.

The scientists note that ocean acidification is already detectable, and is accelerating. They caution that its negative socio-economic impacts can only be avoided by limiting future atmospheric CO2 levels.

Prince Albert II of Monaco has urged political leaders to heed the Monaco Declaration as they prepare for climate negotiations at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen this year. "I strongly support this declaration, which is in full accord with my efforts and those of my Foundation to alleviate climate change," he said.

The Monaco Declaration is based on the Research Priorities Report developed by participants at last October's 2nd international symposium on The Ocean in a High-CO2 World, organized by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the International Geosphere Biosphere Programme (IGBP), with the support of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and several other partners.

"The chemistry is so fundamental and changes so rapid and severe that impacts on organisms appear unavoidable," said James Orr of the Marine Environment Laboratories (MEL-IAEA) and chairman of the symposium. "The questions are now how bad will it be and how soon will it happen. The report from the symposium summarizes the state of the science and priorities for future research, while the Monaco Declaration implores political leaders to launch urgent actions to limit the source of the problem."

"In order to advance the science of ocean acidification, we need to bring together the best scientists to share their latest research results and to set priorities for research to improve our knowledge of the processes and of the impacts of acidification on marine ecosystems," explained Patricio Bernal, Executive Secretary of UNESCO IOC. "The Ocean in a High-CO2 World Symposia Series provides this forum to scientists every four years, and the Research Priorities Report it produces represents an authoritative assessment of what we know about acidification impacts."

The Declaration and Report was presented by James Orr, Jean-Pierre Gattuso, coordinator of the European Project on Ocean Acidification (EPOCA), and Denis Allemand of the Prince Albert II Foundation, at the ASLO Aquatic Sciences Conference in Nice on 30 January.

Links to the Declaration and Report as well as Spanish and French versions of this Press Release can be found on the [Ocean Acidification Network](#)

International media covering this story include:

- [The New York Times](#)
- [BBC](#)
- [AFP](#)
- [G Magazine \(Australia\)](#)
- [Otago Daily News \(New Zealand\)](#)
- [Science Daily \(USA\)](#)
- [Grist \(USA\)](#)
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The Commission

- IOC Assemblies & Executive-Councils
- About the IOC
- IOC 50th Anniversary Strategy
- Programme & Budget
- IOC Officers Secretariat
- Old IOC Web Page
- Employment

Services

- Documents
- People
- Meetings Calendar
- Register New Member

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