

WAAS-UNOG e-CONFERENCE ON STRATEGIES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Impacts of Climate Change and Covid-19 on Coastal areas



"Impacts of Climate Change and Covid-19, in coastal areas"

June 17th, 7 PM CET/ 12 PM CST / 10 AM PST



Join the workshop during the upcoming e-conference on
Global Leadership in the 21st century

Strategies for Transformative Global Leadership

Actions and strategies to ensure a sustainable future for marine and coastal areas.

Register at: <https://bit.ly/GL21POP>



Link to register for the specific conference: <https://bit.ly/GL21COAST>

Historically, coastal zones (ocean-land interface) have been a border in which many civilizations have developed through commerce and cultural exchange with other towns. Currently, the importance of coastal areas has been strategic, both from the point of view of economic development as well as national security. Coastal areas house a high diversity of economic activities such as energy production, extraction of hydrocarbons and minerals, fishing and aquaculture, maritime transportation and tourism, to name a few, and which usually presents itself as conflict sites over the use and appropriation of resources, such like the soil, the water and the landscape.

Coastal areas are considered to be the most fragile ecosystems subjected to different pressures, particularly from anthropogenic activities. It is important to emphasize that these regions not only provide quality food and protein to millions of citizens around the world, but also great ecosystem services. More than

half of the world population lives within a 100 km strip of coastline; by 2025, 75% of the world population could live in coastal areas.

Workshop Methodology: The workshop had 34 participants from a diverse range of countries including México, USA, India, Switzerland, Barbados, Tanzania, Japan, Nigeria and others. Three analysis and discussion groups were formed based on the themes, youth leadership, coastal communities and Blue Economy. The group on youth leadership consisted of young participants, while the other two groups were intergenerational consisting of not only youth, but also adult activists, oceanographers, coastal communities and others. Each of these groups addressed three critical thematically different questions that was intended to culminate as **transformative actions to solve ocean-related issues, and the kind of leadership that propels them.**

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS:

1. **Youth Leaders - How can youth be involved in the care and protection of marine environment and coastal areas, and what leadership skills need to be developed in order for their involvement to become effective?**

The central point of the discussion and analysis among the young participants focused on education, formal and non-formal, supported by the development of specific workshops or courses to sensitize youth on the impact of their actions and develop skills on how to protect the environment. Additionally, the participants highlighted the importance of young people initiating and/or joining and supporting existing movements and

groups to amplify the cause and action in a unified manner. The need to advocate for the necessary change in environmental legislation that would attract marine-related investment and new technologies was noted. According to the young participants, to be brave, fearless, showing compassion and empathy, and believing in collaborative teamwork are the requisite leadership skills for youth to amplify action.



State a transformative action and what kind of leadership propels it: The action is EDUCATION, and the leadership that

propels the movement should be fearless, compassionate, empathic and above all, collaborative.

"Teach them (children and youth) how to take concrete steps and take action. Motivate them and show them they can really make a change in the world"

– Jenny Xu, USA

"There are three skills that are important: communication, compassion and empathy, and teamwork"

- Salomon Zaga, México

"We must work on individual action but eventually, we have to take bigger collective action. Start local but go big."

- Maria Jacques, México

2. Coastal Communities - What practical role do coastal communities play to participate in solving the problems (including COVID-19) that arise in those regions, and how would leadership need to transform to achieve the solutions?

Being the main theme of the workshop, the fundamental concepts that stand out from the analysis of the coastal communities were: inclusive processes, climate action, full involvement of civil society, construction of community leadership over individual leadership, promotion of environmentally friendly processes to create awareness, as well as

define ways to implement better solutions that allow an environmental balance. Focus community efforts in Small Island States that allow them to develop resilience and face the risks of sea level rise and hurricanes, among others. Two areas were highlighted for the development of coastal areas: the first is to put in the hands of the coastal



community the best possible information and the second is to have coastal management plans. Those plans should include not only the coastal-marine area but also the urban area to prevent the loss of unique ecosystems such as mangroves, for the benefit of the real estate sector.

State a transformative action and what kind of leadership propels it: To build a participatory community process for the protection of the coastal zone through the

Periodic assessment of existing climate-related policies to establish their efficacy and relevance. The session concluded by reinforcing Community Leadership as the key to the conservation and protection of these regions.

bottom-up construction model, and the leadership to propel it will be a community-level leadership.

"Leadership is not an individual act, it is a community act and every community participant is a leader her/himself"

- Midori Kawano, Japan

3. Blue Economy - What strategies that promote a Blue Economy can be implemented to mobilize action by and for communities in order to protect the ocean and coastal areas?

Education is a key area of focus. Communities need to be empowered to understand their own sustainability, take more responsibility and control their own actions in a sustainable manner at the local level. Experiential education must be incorporated from the primary school level, exposing students to the important resources in the marine and coastal areas. Importantly, governments need to educate themselves on the concept of Blue Economy in order to facilitate its implementation. Scientists should

State a transformative action and what kind of leadership propels it: Managing disaster risks by involving communities and empowering them to understand and

interact with the local communities by engaging in research and monitoring, and keep the flow of information, so that the communities can adjust their own practices and use of resources to keep them sustainable. Addressing the lack of equity and empowering coastal communities to adapt to the changing environment while leading sustainability practices in the coastal and marine areas will be key towards realizing Blue Economy.

sustainably adapt to the changing environment, while educating others on the importance of protecting marine and coastal areas.



“Blue economy is mainly sustainable use of the ocean resources to improve community livelihood”

- Damas Mbaga, Tanzania

KEY OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOP:

- 1) Education is key and the youth leadership that propels action should be fearless, empathetic and collaborative.
- 2) Community-led initiatives (by and for community interventions) and community level leadership will propel the bottom-up structural interventions and models in the protection of coastal zones.
- 3) Managing disaster risks by involving communities are important to mitigate, manage, and adapt to these risks in a sustainable manner.

