



MARIPOLDATA Ocean Seminar Series

Recent developments in negotiations on marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)

Wednesday, March 30, 10:00 – 11:30am (CEST)

Negotiations for a new legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction have taken place in-person again this month after over two years of postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were a number of initiatives to keep the momentum during the extended intersessional period, e.g. a Virtual Intersessional Work by the President of the BBNJ Intergovernmental Conference and informal High Seas Treaty Dialogues, initiated by Belgium, Costa Rica and Monaco and an Alliance of NGOs (High Seas Alliance). Yet, online discussions could not reach the legal status of in-person negotiations and while it served for actors to discuss and clarify contentious topics to get them a step further to consensus, no *formal* advancements on the draft text could be made. When negotiators convened in New York this time, it was supposed to be the last session of the Conference to finalise the future BBNJ agreement, but pending issues remain that require further discussions and another session of the Conference is planned for August 2022.

In the MARIPOLDATA Ocean Seminar, **Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli**, Independent international lawyer, former Director of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, United Nations and one of the moderators of the High Seas Treaty Dialogues will give an overview of recent developments in the BBNJ process: How did the informal, virtual exchanges in the intersessional period impact the negotiations at the Conference? How did the COVID regulations, including a limited number of delegates allowed in the building and restrictions to observers, change the dynamics of the negotiations? What were the main outcomes in the different package elements and cross cutting issues after the two-week in-person negotiations in New York? What remains to be discussed in the coming months? And how can the time until the upcoming Conference be effectively used to further align positions and form a good negotiation basis?

Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli worked in the United Nations on ocean issues for almost 30 years, including as Director of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs. Since her retirement, she has moderated several informal dialogues among States and other stakeholders on BBNJ issues, amongst other activities.



The monthly [MARIPOLDATA Ocean Seminar Series](#) offer a virtual space to get information and engage in exchanges on ocean governance issues, through presentations by international experts from academia, governments, international organisations and civil society. It is organised by the MARIPOLDATA project.

To register: via email to ina.tessnow-vonwyssocki@univie.ac.at, indicating your name and institution. You will receive an email with further information and the link to participate in the virtual space

More information: <https://www.maripoldata.eu/newsevents/#oceanseminarseries>